INSIDE: COOLEST, MOST INNOVATIVE PC OF THE YEAR!



# COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

THE BEST PC GAMING MAGAZINE

EXCLUSIVE SCREENS & INTERVIEW

## Unreal Tournament 2004

The deathmatch king returns to kick your ass once again

## 20+ Reviews!

Halo, Battlefield 1942: Secret Weapons of WWII, Tony Hawk 4, Homeworld 2, Republic, & more!

EXCLUSIVE!

# 101 FREE PC GAMES

Your ultimate guide to the best free games, mods, and more–and how to get them NOW!

## EXCLUSIVE SCREENS & PREVIEWS!

MAX PAYNE 2



ARMED & DANGEROUS



AMERICA'S ARMY: SPECIAL FORCES



DECEMBER 2003 ISSUE 233
$8.99 U.S. $9.99 Canada
ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA
12>
0 74470 06950 8
Display Until Dec 2
WWW.COMPUTERGAMING.COM

Behind every deadly Nazi tank is another deadly Nazi tank.



**1943**, German Panzer tank divisions guard the gates of Europe, controlling the ports of North Africa and the advance of an Allied army with bloody force. Of all the weapons in its arsenal the most feared was its reputation. Face your fears, free North Africa and fight for history to repeat itself.



February 14, 1943 Tunisia, Kasserine Pass

The 5th Panzer division punishes the US 2nd Corps in their initial assault, inflicting grievous losses.



May 7, 1943 Allies Take Tunisia



February 22, 1943 Tunisia, Kasserine Pass

Take back the Pass. Fight through German lines, encountering allied and axis tanks and troops. Steal a German tank and inflict continuous casualties on unsuspecting Nazis.




TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

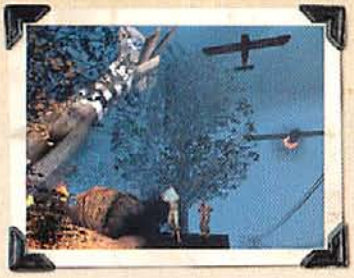
Violence

PC DVD-ROM SOFTWARE

*Requires Medal of Honor Allied Assault™ to play.

©2003 Electronic Arts Inc. Electronic Arts, EA GAMES, the EA GAMES logo, "You Don't Play, You Volunteer.", Medal of Honor Allied Assault and "Challenge Everything" are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts in the U.S. and/or other countries. Medal of Honor is a trademark or registered trademark of Electronic Arts Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries for computer and video game products. All rights reserved. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. EA GAMES™ is an Electronic Arts™ brand.

POWERED BY gamespy



July 13, 1943 Sicily, Italy

Glide into Sicily under the cover of night with a dead pilot at the controls, crash land in the Italian countryside and find your unit. The assault on the boot begins.



January 22, 1944 Anzio Maneuver

Destroy Germany's K5 rail guns, making the landing at Anzio safe for the Allied 3rd.



October 6, 1943 Bizerte Canal

Cross the Canal under heavy fire and hit the ground gunning. Engage the enemy in street combat to take command of the German port city.



May 17, 1944 Exiting Monte Cassino

German Panzer divisions surround you. They can't get away this time. Smash, cripple and exploit the heavy armor with the new British PIAT Anti-Tank Weapon.

Eleven single-player levels that will determine the fate of Europe.

Enter and exit vehicles including the M4 Sherman Tank. Take POWs.

New soldier models, skins and voices including American, British and Italian troops.

Multiplayer battles: Tug-of-War Mode, Objective Mode and Liberation Mode.

**You Don't Play, You Volunteer.™ Enlist at moh.ea.com**

MEDAL OF HONOR
SECOND EDITION ALLIED ASSAULT NORTH AFRICA
BREAKTHROUGH
EXPANSION PACK

EA GAMES
Challenge Everything™



North Africa, 1943.




Commandos 3: Destination Berlin © 2003 Pyro Studios. Published by Eidos Interactive. Commandos 3: Destination Berlin is a trademark of Pyro Studios S.L. Pyro Studios and the Pyro Studios logo are both trademarks of Pyro Studios S.L. Eidos, Eidos Interactive and the Eidos Interactive logo are all registered trademarks of Eidos Interactive, Inc. All rights reserved. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. GameSpy and the "Powered by GameSpy" design are trademarks of GameSpy Industries, Inc. All rights reserved.

# BRING IT ON.



"COMMANDOS 3 JUST BLOWS ITS PREDECESSOR AWAY."
- GAMESPOT



Prepare for a variety of strategies as bombing raids alter the environment, requiring you to change your tactics on the fly.

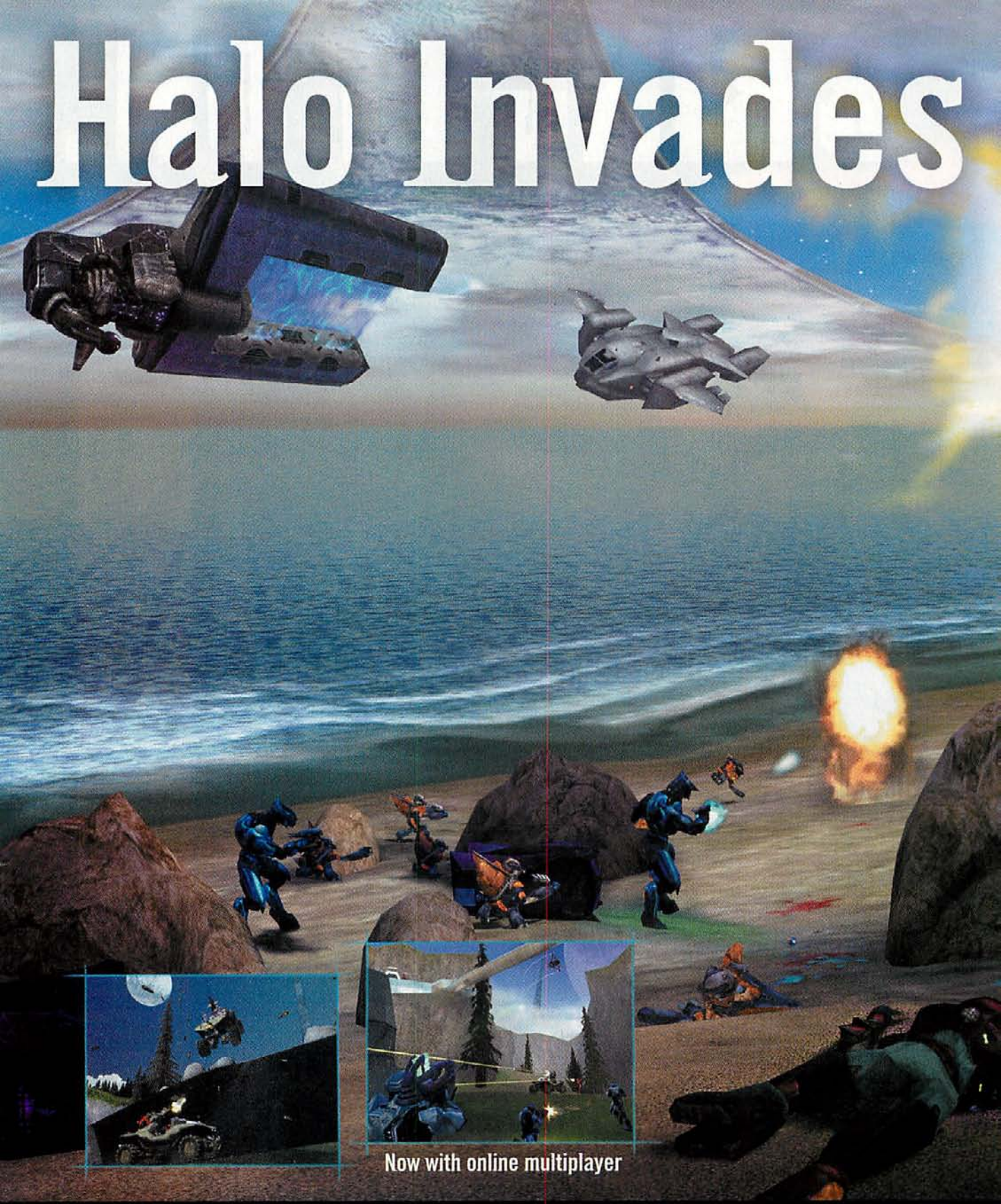


Navigate detailed interior and exterior environments using ambushes, assaults, stealth and sabotage to disrupt enemy advances.



Experience WWII warfare head-to-head in all new deathmatch multiplayer campaigns.

# Halo Invades

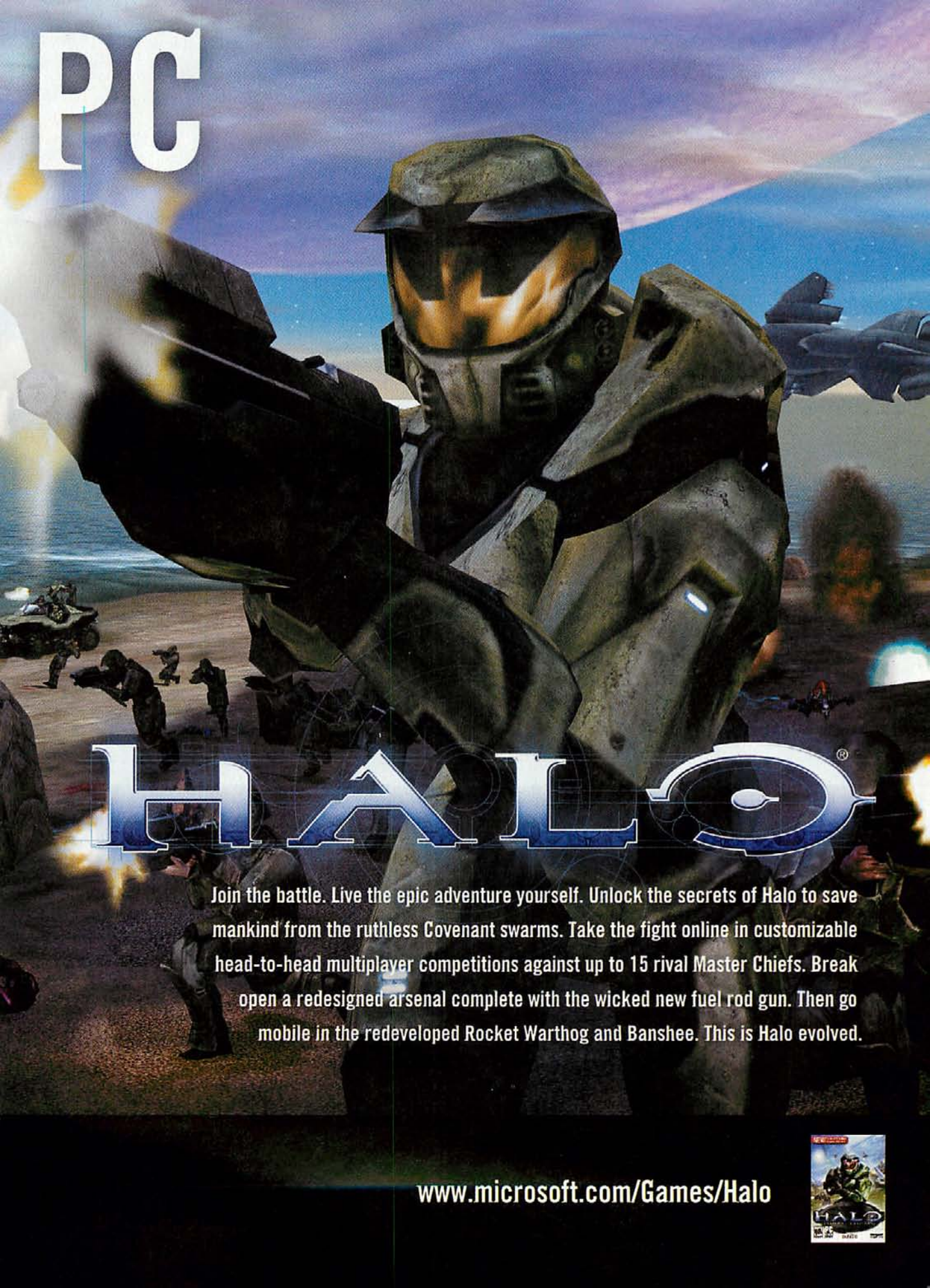


Now with online multiplayer

MATURE 17+
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Violence
Blood and Gore

BUNGIE www.bungie.net
gearbox software
POWERED BY gamespy
Recommended on Dell Dimension XPS
Microsoft game studios

©2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Halo, and the Microsoft Game Studios logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of the Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. Other products and company names mentioned herein may be trademarks of their respective owners. All rights reserved. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. GameSpy and the "Powered by GameSpy" design are trademarks of GameSpy Industries, Inc. The Dell logo is a registered trademark of Dell Inc. All rights reserved.


PC
HALO®
Join the battle. Live the epic adventure yourself. Unlock the secrets of Halo to save mankind from the ruthless Covenant swarms. Take the fight online in customizable head-to-head multiplayer competitions against up to 15 rival Master Chiefs. Break open a redesigned arsenal complete with the wicked new fuel rod gun. Then go mobile in the redeveloped Rocket Warthog and Banshee. This is Halo evolved.
www.microsoft.com/Games/Halo


TERMINATOR® 3
WAR OF THE MACHINES™
WWW.T3WAR.COM
PC
CD-ROM
SOFTWARE
INTERMEDIA
C2 PICTURES™
ATARI

# HUMANITY SITS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION

Join the technologically superior Skynet-CRS force or lock-and-load with the human Tech-Com rebels.
Enlist with larger forces for an all-out multiplayer massacre.
Choose your weapon — and your allegiance — carefully.
The future of humanity lies in the balance...

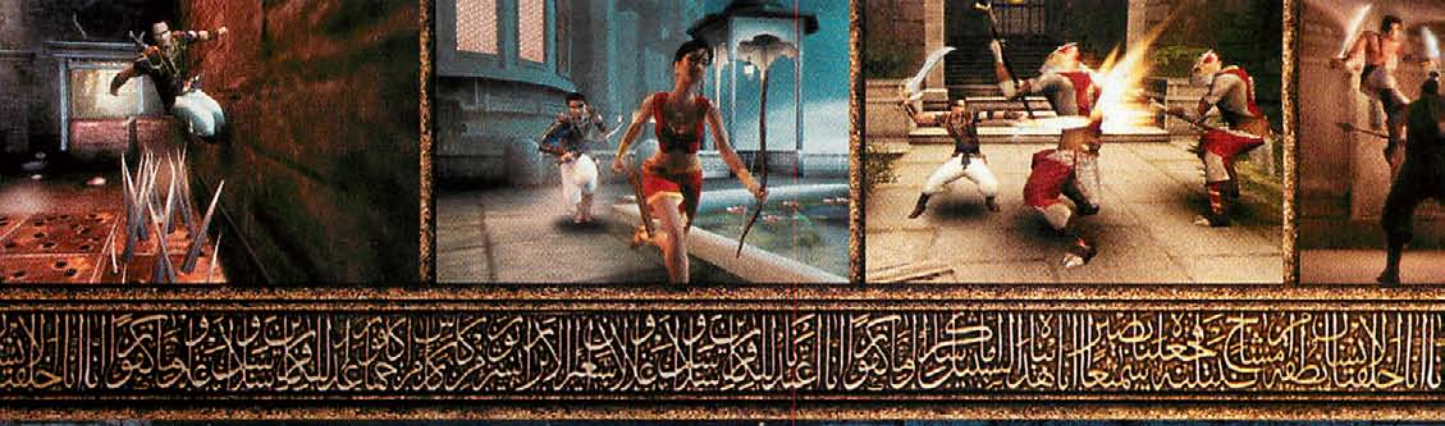
Battle through 10 apocalyptic combat scenarios, inspired by the film • Fight as Arnold Schwarzenegger's Terminator™ • Survive maximum carnage with up to 32 online players



RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more ratings information.

Terminator® 3: War of the Machines™ © 2003 Atari, Inc. & IC Video LLC. All rights reserved. Developed by Clever's Games KFT. Terminator © used under license. TM © 2003 IMF Internationale Medien und Film GmbH & Co. 3 Produktions KG. The Ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other Trademarks are the property of their respective owners. GameSpy and the "Powered by GameSpy" design are trademarks of GameSpy Industries, Inc. All rights reserved.

POWERED BY gamespy



IN MY QUEST
FOR REDEMPTION

NOT EVEN MY
DEATH

## I COMMAND THE FORCES OF TIME.

DECEIVED BY A TREACHEROUS VIZIER, I WAS LED TO UNLEASH THE DARK POWERS OF THE SANDS OF TIME UPON THE SULTAN'S KINGDOM. NOW, AS DARKNESS CONSUMES ALL IN ITS PATH, MY SPEED, AGILITY, AND SKILL AS A WARRIOR ARE NOT ENOUGH. I MUST LEARN TO COMMAND THE SANDS TO SLOW, FREEZE, ACCELERATE, AND EVEN REVERSE TIME ITSELF. IF I FAIL TO UNDO MY FATAL MISTAKE, ALL SHALL PERISH WITH ME. MINE IS A FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL . . . NOT GLORY.


TEEN T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Blood
Violence
Suggestive Themes

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

XBOX

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

PlayStation 2

GAME BOY ADVANCE

www.princeofpersiagame.com

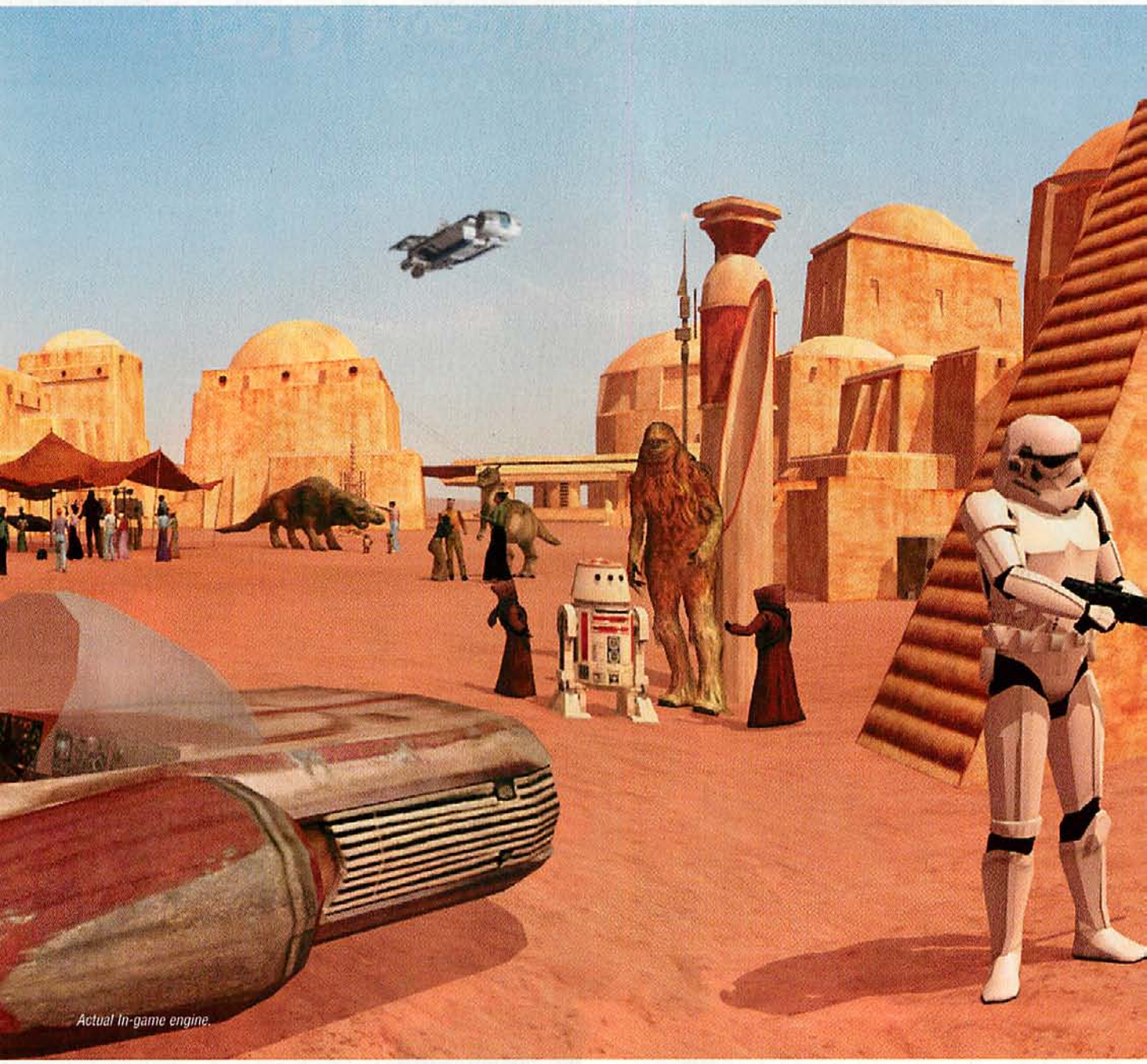



© 2003 Ubisoft Entertainment. Based on Prince of Persia created by Jordan Mechner. All Rights Reserved. Ubisoft and the Ubisoft logo are trademarks of Ubisoft Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. Prince of Persia The Sands of Time is a trademark of Jordan Mechner used under license by Ubisoft Entertainment. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. TM, ®, Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox Logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

UBISOFT™

STAR WARS GALAXIES™

EXPERIENCE THE GREATEST SAGA EVER TOLD - YOURS.




TEEN T Violence ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

Game Experience May Change During Online Play

The way it's meant to be played NVIDIA.

Official *Star Wars*® Web Site
www.starwars.com

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

SOE® SONY ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT

LucasArts and the LucasArts logo are registered trademarks of Lucasfilm Ltd. *Star Wars Galaxies* is a trademark of Lucasfilm Entertainment Company Ltd. © 2003 Lucasfilm Entertainment Company Ltd. or Lucasfilm Ltd. & ® or TM as indicated. All rights reserved. SOE and the SOE logo are registered trademarks of Sony Online Entertainment Inc. in the United States and other countries. © 2003 Sony Online Entertainment Inc. The name NVIDIA and the NVIDIA logo are registered trademarks of NVIDIA Corporation. The term "The way it's meant to be played," and the "NVIDIA: The way it's meant to be played" logo are trademarks of NVIDIA Corporation.



AN

# EMPIRE DIVIDED™

Welcome to ***Star Wars* Galaxies**™—Massively multiplayer online gaming set in a galaxy far, far away. The Death Star has been destroyed and the galaxy is torn by civil war. Choose your allegiance - Rebel, Imperial or neutral - and immerse yourself in the *Star Wars*® universe like never before.

LUCAS Arts

WWW.STARWARSGALAXIES.COM

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD December 2003 Issue #233





**96** COVER STORY
## 101 Free Games
**Okay, so technically, we've got more than 101 free games, add-ons, and mods for you to download and check out in this story—but who's counting? Just turn the page already.**

**24** **Editorial**
Jeff makes the bold, controversial claim that getting stuff for free is cool. Way to take a stand!

**28** **Letters**
Another three pages of rants and raves from our loyal fanbase of geeks, shut-ins, and convicts. Thank God our building has security guards.

**40** **Loading...**
This month's Loading shots will literally blow you away. Check out a sweet, sweet screenshot from **Max Payne 2,** and take a long look at **America's Army 2.0.**

**50** **Read Me**
Johnny Liu makes his debut by going to Alabama to hang out with U.S. Army Special Forces and play **America's Army 2.0.** Also, check out his impressions of **UT2004.** Plus, news on **Freedom Force 2,** and a look at what could be the first book of poetry about videogames.

**Columns**
62 Homebrew



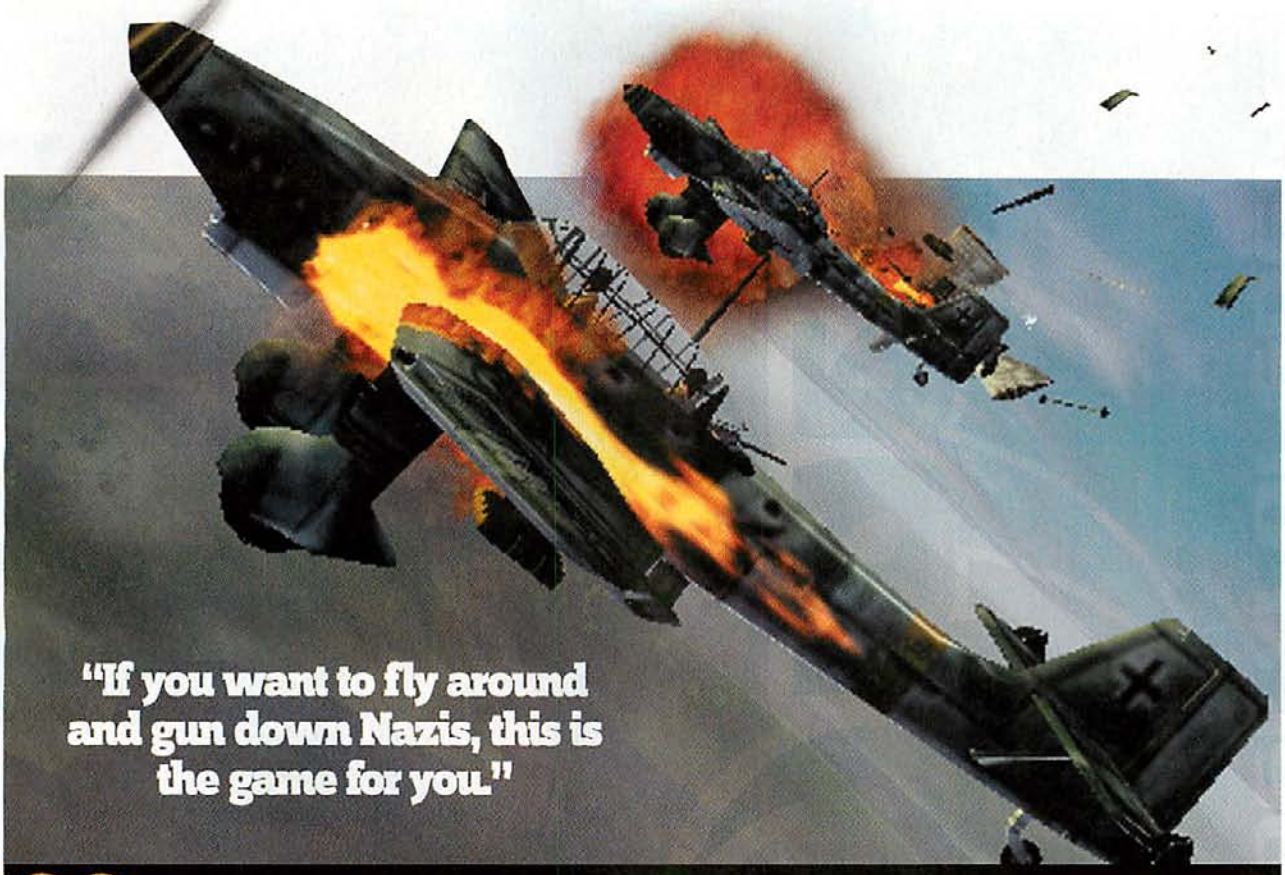


**114** **Unreal Tournament 2004**
Cliffy B keeps it unreal as we corner him this month to talk about the state of rock music, game design, and why **Unreal Tournament 2004** is looking so damn cool.

**172** **Tech**
A $6,500 PC that's worth...well...just read the review. Darren beats up on Air Flo's new mouse as well as a headset from Seinhesser. Also, we look at Microsoft's latest cordless desktop. Of course there's a new Cracked Case, Tech Medics, Wil Power, and the world's last Killer Rigs.

**186** **Gamer's Edge**
Build your very own dynasty with these essential tips for **Madden NFL 2004.** Plus, figure out that plethora of ships in **Homeworld 2,** and watch Bruce and Tom try to out-wizard each other in **Age of Wonders: Shadow Magic.**

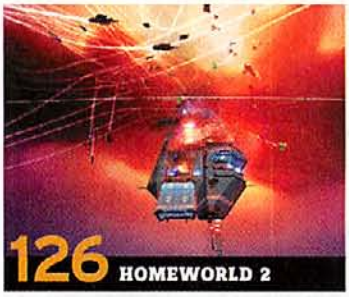
**200** **Scorched Earth**
What the hell did Tyne Daly ever do to Robert, anyway?




**88** SECRET WEAPONS OVER NORMANDY
Soar across the world–and shoot down anything that gets in your way.



**124** HALO



**126** HOMEWORLD 2



**144** TONY HAWK 4

## Previews

78 The Lord of the Rings: The Battle for Middle-earth
80 Terminator 3: War of the Machines
84 Silent Storm
86 Armed & Dangerous
88 Secret Weapons Over Normandy
90 Wanted Guns
90 Football Deluxe
90 Angels vs. Devils

## Reviews

124 Halo
126 Homeworld 2
128 Warrior Kings: Battles
129 Runaway: A Road Adventure
130 Etherlords II
131 Mistmare
134 Republic: The Revolution
136 Cold Zero: No Mercy
138 Battlefield 1942: Secret Weapons of World War II
140 Medal of Honor: Allied Assault–Breakthrough
140 Revisionist History: America's Army
142 Hoyle Majestic Chess
142 Heaven & Hell
144 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
148 Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004



**50** READ ME
The U.S. Army at home in sweet home Alabama.



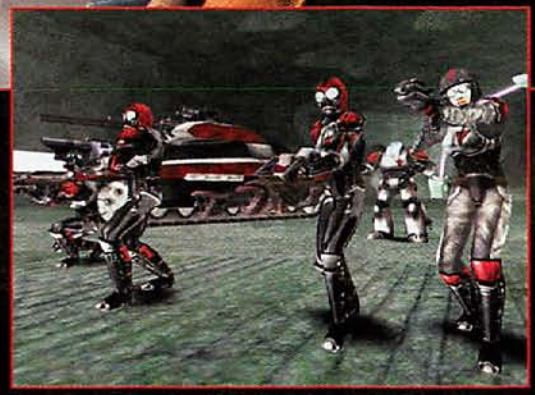
**172** TECH
Is this the coolest PC ever?


For Land. For Power. Forever.™
PlanetSide™
CORE COMBAT™





Head-to-Head urban warfare gameplay in massive subterranean cities



New weapons and vehicles to enhance combat tactics and strategy



Harvest ancient alien technology in six new massive underground caverns

## Get Hard-Core in the #1 massively multiplayer online first-person action game!

**Alert your Empire, get to the core and unlock the secrets! Introducing PlanetSide: Core Combat™, delivering new massive underground war zones and caverns, upgradeable surface level facilities, and an unlockable form of ancient technology to access new high-powered weapons, vehicles and underground transports. Give your outfit the edge for victory above and below the surface of Auraxis. ™ THE BATTLES HAVE JUST BEGUN!™**

TEEN
T™
Violence
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org
Game Experience May Change During Online Play

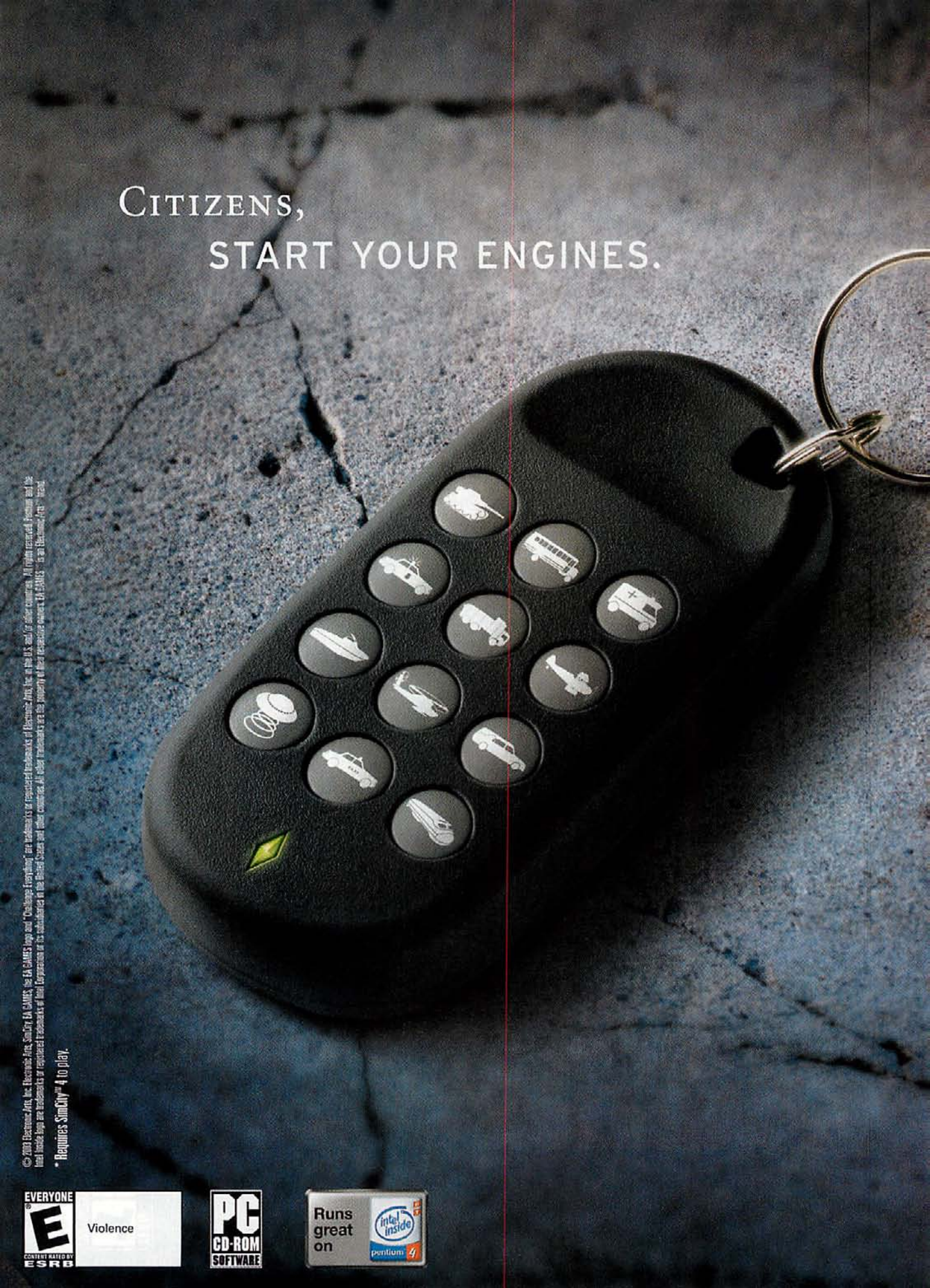
PC CD ROM

**www.planetside.com**

INTERNET CONNECTION REQUIRED
ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTION FEES REQUIRED

SOE
SONY ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT

© 2003 Sony Online Entertainment Inc. PlanetSide and PlanetSide: Core Combat and all PlanetSide slogans and placenames are trademarks of Sony Online Entertainment Inc. SOE and the SOE logo are registered trademarks of Sony Online Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All rights reserved.



© 2003 Electronic Arts, Inc. Electronic Arts, SimCity, EA GAMES, the EA GAMES logo and "Challenge Everything" are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts, Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. All rights reserved. Pentium and the Intel Inside logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. EA GAMES™ is an Electronic Arts™ brand.



NAB HOOLIGANS. OR DONUTS.



REMEMBER MURPHY'S LAW.



FULL SPEED AHEAD CAPTAIN.

YOU'RE THE KING OF THE ROAD, RAIL, AIR AND WATERWAYS AND YOU'VE GOT THE KEYCHAIN TO PROVE IT. STEP OUT OF THE MAYOR'S MANSION AND PUT THE PEDAL TO THE METAL BY JOYRIDING IN A TANK, TAKING OVER A TRAIN OR BREAKING THE SPEED LIMIT IN A POLICE CAR. FINISH ALL NEW "U-DRIVE-IT" MISSIONS TO EARN FAST VEHICLES, NEW BUILDINGS AND COLD HARD CASH FOR YOUR CITY. HEY, IT'S GOOD TO BE THE MAYOR. EAGAMES.COM

SIMCITY™4 RUSH HOUR EXPANSION PACK* IS ALSO INCLUDED IN THE ALL-NEW SIMCITY™4 DELUXE EDITION.

SIMCITY™4
RUSH HOUR
EXPANSION PACK*

EA GAMES

Challenge Everything™

# Diplomacy can be a heated exchange.
# Especially at 518°




**Build castles. Defend your land. Besiege enemies. Rule the realm.**

Swords clash and catapults launch, as flame-engulfed arrows scorch the medieval sky. It's up to your cunning and courage to vanquish the enemy–or taste his scalding wrath. More than an RTS, it's the most visceral 3-D combat ever seen in a strategy game.

Sequel to PC Gamer's "Top 50 Games of All Time"*



TEEN T Violence — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

VIVENDI UNIVERSAL games

SIERRA

Impressions Games

*PC GAMER AUGUST/2001

© 2003 SIERRA ENTERTAINMENT, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. SIERRA, THE SIERRA LOGO, LORDS OF THE REALM®III, AND THE IMPRESSIONS GAMES LOGO ARE TRADEMARKS OR REGISTERED



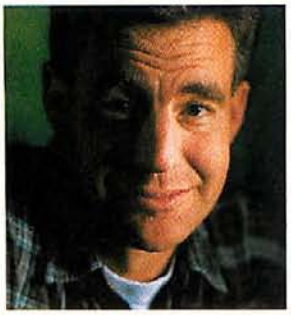







WWW.LORDS3.COM

TRADEMARKS OF SIERRA ENTERTAINMENT, INC. IN THE U.S. AND OTHER COUNTRIES. VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES AND THE VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES LOGO ARE TRADEMARKS OF VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES, INC. ALL OTHER TRADEMARKS ARE PROPERTY OF THEIR RESPECTIVE OWNERS.



# Free! Free! Free!

## Or, alternatively, you can pay $20 for crap like Mistmare

Yay! Free games! Who's gonna say no to that? Not me. I mean, yeah, sure, I never pay for my games anyway, which is why I won't leave *CGW* until they drag my decomposing carcass out of here on a gurney, but still. That's not the point. The point is: Getting something for free is better than paying for it, which is also the main reason I got married. Just kidding. My wife makes me pay, too.

Anyway, as you know, we spend a lot of time and space around here touting the latest and greatest blockbuster games from major publishers. It's the way things are and always will be, so don't bother complaining. It's not 1985 anymore. Gaming is big business. But, though the *WarCrafts* and *EverQuests* and *Simses* of the gaming world generate most of the headlines (and dollars), there is a huge, thriving community of developers, websites, artists, and fans devoted to far more humble ventures–like shareware, freeware, and mods.

Though there's far less money involved–and the games are often nothing more than one fanboy's after-school project–the results are, in some cases, remarkable. You can find games for free, or for dirt cheap, that will keep you far more entertained for far longer than many of the so-called "A-list" titles, which often deliver far less than promised, as we've all seen.

**Getting something for free is better than paying for it.**

So this month, we turn our gaze to the free stuff, the cheap stuff–the stuff you can download or play off the Web without denting your bank account or pissing off your wife or mom. And rather than just giving you a laundry list of titles, your tireless, conscientious *CGW* editors took the bullet for you and did the hard work: We played this stuff for weeks, weeding out the good from the bad, to give you only the games we felt were worth your time. You see? We love you. We keep telling you this but you don't believe us. Now quit your crying and go make us a sandwich.

In other news, take a good look at the following pages this month, because this is the last time they're going to look this way. That's right–we're redesigning again. I'm warning you now, in advance, because I know you like change even less than we do. But I promise, it's going to be good. Fear not. It'll be all the things you love about *CGW*, just somewhat less sucky looking.

Finally, please join me in welcoming two new editors to the fold of Team *CGW*: assistant editor Johnny Liu and editorial intern Ryan Scott. Both are hard-working, enthusiastic, and happy to be here–but a couple months around this joint should cure them of that problem.

Now go read our cover story and find some good, free ways to waste time. Yay!

**Jeff Green**
**Editor-in-Chief**

**SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES**
For service questions, address changes, or to order, please contact us. Web: service.computergamingworld.com (for customer service) or subscribe.computergamingworld.com (to order). Phone: U.S. or Canada (800) 827-4450 or (850) 682-7624; elsewhere (303) 604-7445.
**MAIL:** Computer Gaming World, P.O. Box 57167, Boulder, CO 80322-7167. Please include your mailing label with any correspondence. Fax: U.S. and Canada (850) 683-4094; elsewhere (303) 604-0518.
**E-MAIL:** cgw@neodata.com. Please type your full name and the address at which you subscribe; do not send attachments. Subscriptions: The one-year (12 issues) subscription rate is $19.97, or $34.97 with CD-ROM. Outside the U.S., add $16.00 per year for surface mail, U.S. funds only. Please allow three to six weeks before receiving your first issue, as well as for any changes to take place on an existing subscription.
**BACK ISSUES:** Back issues are $8.00 each in the U.S., $10.00 each elsewhere (subject to availability). Prepayment is required. Make your checks payable to Computer Gaming World. Mail your request to: Back Issues, Ziff-Davis Publishing Inc., P.O. Box 53131, Boulder, CO 80322-3131.
**MAILING LISTS:** We sometimes make lists of our customers to mailers of goods and services that may interest you. If you do not wish to receive their mailings, please write to us at Computer Gaming World, P.O. Box 57167, Boulder, CO 80322-7167.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

**EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT**
Editor-in-Chief **Jeff Green**
Editor **Ken Brown**
Managing Editor **Dana Jongewaard**
Technical Editor **William O'Neal**
Reviews Editor **Robert Coffey**
Previews Editor **Darren Gladstone**
Assistant Editor **Johnny Liu**
CD Editor **Ryan Scott**

**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS**
**Charles Ardai, T. Byrl Baker, Loyd Case, Tom Chick, Ron Dulin, Bruce Geryk, Jeff Lackey, Raphael Liberatore, Thomas L. McDonald, Erik Wolpaw**

**ART DEPARTMENT**
Art Director **Rob Schultz**
Associate Art Director **Michael Jennings**

**COPY DESK**
Copy Chief **Kristen Salvatore**
Copy Editor **Tom Edwards**
Copy Editor **Greg Ford**
Copy Editor **Maritza Refuerzo**

**PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT**
Manufacturing Director **Carlos Lugo**
Art Production Manager **Michele Manousos**
Senior Production Manager **Anne Marie Miguel**
Production Manager **Monica Brent**
Assistant Production Manager **Teresa Newson**

**ZIFF DAVIS GAME GROUP**
Editorial Director **John Davison**
Creative Director **Simon Cox**
Business Director **Cathy Bendoff**

**HOW TO CONTACT THE EDITORS**
To contact any member of the staff: firstname_lastname@ziffdavis.com
Address nonsubscription-related questions and feedback to *CGW* Editorial, 101 2nd Street, 8th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105. Or you may contact us via e-mail: cgwletters@ziffdavis.com; phone: (415) 357-4900; or editorial fax: (415) 357-4977. Website: www.computergaming.com

**ADVERTISING & SALES DEPARTMENT**
Group Publisher **Lee Uniacke**
Associate Group Publisher **Stan Taigen**
stan_taigen@ziffdavis.com (415) 357-4915
Advertising Director **Marci Yamaguchi**
marci_yamaguchi@ziffdavis.com (415) 357-4944
District Sales Manager/
Bay Area Peninsula **Mary Gray**
mary_gray@ziffdavis.com (415) 547-8782
Account Executive/
Bay Area Peninsula **Aaron Gallion**
aaron_gallion@ziffdavis.com (425) 823-1635
Regional Sales Manager/
Southwest Territory **Julie Steelman**
julie_steelman@ziffdavis.com (714) 491-3998
Account Executive/
Southwest Territory **Eve Friedman**
eve_friedman@ziffdavis.com (415) 547-8781
Regional Sales Manager/
Midwest Territory **Marc Callison**
marc_callison@ziffdavis.com (630) 810-4095
Account Executive/
Midwest Territory **Candace Droz**
candace_droz@ziffdavis.com (415) 357-4920
Regional Sales Manager/
East Coast Territory **Ian Sinclair**
ian_sinclair@ziffdavis.com (203) 255-5795
Account Executive/
East Coast Territory **Amy Mishra**
amy_mishra@ziffdavis.com (415) 547-8780
Online Sales **Bill Young**
bill_young@ziffdavis.com (415) 547-8453
Marketing Director **Rey Ledda**
rey_ledda@ziffdavis.com (415) 547-8775
Marketing Coordinator **Wayne Shiu**
wayne_shiu@ziffdavis.com (415) 547-8248
Senior Advertising Coordinator **Tipler Ubbelohde**
tipler_ubbelohde@ziffdavis.com (415) 357-4930
Sales Assistant **Alison Rubino**
alison_rubino@ziffdavis.com (415) 547-8779

**HOW TO CONTACT ADVERTISING & SALES**
Address inquiries to: *CGW* Advertising, 101 2nd Street, 8th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105; phone: (415) 547-8778; fax: (415) 357-4999.
Founder **Russell Sipe**

# GET HARD-CORE!







**Wage war with thousands of players online in PlanetSide: Core Combat™ and go into battle with the extreme processing power of the Pentium® 4 processor with HT Technology Extreme Edition.**

Runs great on intel inside pentium 4

Commandos will experience unbelievable graphics above and below the surface of Auraxis™, heartpounding realism in the heat of battle, and the incredible responsiveness when confronting enemy soldiers. The battles have just begun.




Visit **www.planetside.com/intel**
Download a Free 7-day Trial of PlanetSide. Enter the Intel® Blast the Holidays Away Sweepstakes!
See website for details.

TEEN
T
Violence
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org
Game Experience May Change During Online Play

INTERNET CONNECTION REQUIRED
ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTION FEES REQUIRED

PLAYS BEST ON ALIENWARE

SOE
SONY ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT

No purchase necessary to enter or to win the sweepstakes. Must be 18 years of age or older and a legal U.S. Resident. Sweepstakes begins on November 1, 2003 and ends on February 1, 2004. Void where prohibited by law. Official Sweepstakes rules may be viewed at www.planetside.com/intel/rules.jsp. © 2003 Sony Online Entertainment Inc. PlanetSide and PlanetSide: Core Combat are trademarks of Sony Online Entertainment Inc. SOE and the SOE logo are registered trademarks of Sony Online Entertainment Inc. Alienware and the Alienware logo are registered trademarks of Alienware Corporation. Pentium and the Intel Inside logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All rights reserved. All other trademarks or tradenames are properties of their respective owners.



**DANA JONGEWAARD**

This month, Dana's not-so-inner geek reemerged with a vengeance as she threw herself into her *Etherlords II* review. As a result, she's enduring a lot of derision at the hands of the other oh-so-cool *CGW* editors, but she's been able to deflect their mockery back onto them by using her powerful Feedback spell. Look on page 130 to see if she thinks the game is less of a loser than her coworkers think she is.

**JOHNNY LIU**

The day before Johnny got his gig with *CGW*, his car died in a blaze of smoke hundreds of miles from home. It was a young car with less than 40,000 miles; the dealer even said it was OK less than a week before his trip. Thankfully and luckily, Johnny doesn't need a car to get to *CGW* everyday. So, don't buy a car that rhymes with Polkswagen, and lawyers—holla back.





**SCOTT STEINBERG**

This smarmy Atlanta-based freelance writer covers booze, broads, and bar etiquette for elite outlets such as *Maxim* and *Playboy*. He insists, however, that he really prefers his *CGW* gig—scouring the bowels of Europe for unsigned games for our monthly Previews column Outta Sight—because it's more "spiritually fulfilling." Passionate or just plain dumb? America, you decide.

**SOPHIA SCHULTZ**

Hi, I'm Sophie. I'm 6 months old. My dad works for *Computer Gaming World*. He's the art director. My dad is way cooler than Jeff Green, and he even knows how to ride a bike without falling off! My dad's been working extra hard lately, especially on the 101 Free Games feature on page 96. But the best is yet to come. This picture was taken after he showed me what the new *CGW* is gonna look like. But you have to wait till next month to see it.



ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA

**Chairman & CEO**
Robert F. Callahan
**Chief Operating Officer & CFO**
Bart W. Catalane
**Senior Executive Vice President, Publishing Operations**
Tom McGrade
**Executive Vice President & Editorial Director**
Michael J. Miller
**Executive Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary**
Gregory Barton

**Senior Vice Presidents**
Jasmine Alexander (Technology & Sales Operations)
Chris Dobbrow (Corporate Sales & Publisher, *eWeek*)
Larry Green (Business Development & Worldwide Licensing)
Derek Irwin (Finance)
Charles Mast (Circulation)
Sloan Seymour (Enterprise Group)
Dale Strang (Game Group)
Jason Young (Internet)

**Vice Presidents**
Ken Beach (Corporate Sales)
Tim Castelli (PC Magazine Group)
Aaron Goldberg (Market Expert)
Michael Krieger (Market Expert)
Charles Lee (Integrated Media)
Jim Louderback (Editor-in-Chief, Internet)
Eric Lundquist (Editor-in-Chief, *eWEEK*)
Bill Machrone (Editorial Development)
Ellen Pearlman (Editor-in-Chief, *CIO Insight*)
Beth Repeta (Human Resources)
Pam Spector (Business Development and International Licensing)
Tom Steinert-Threlkeld (Editor-in-Chief, *Baseline*)
Stephen Sutton (Internet Audience Development)
Elda Vale (Research & Market Intelligence)
Stephen Veith (Publisher, *CIO Insight*)

**Senior Director, Manufacturing**
Carlos Lugo

Contact anyone on this masthead via e-mail using first name_last name@ziffdavis.com

**PERMISSIONS**
COPYRIGHT © 2003 ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. COMPUTER GAMING WORLD IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF ZIFF DAVIS PUBLISHING HOLDINGS INC. REPRODUCTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT PERMISSION IS PROHIBITED. FOR PERMISSION TO REUSE MATERIAL IN THIS PUBLICATION OR TO USE OUR LOGO, CONTACT ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA'S RIGHTS AND PERMISSIONS MANAGER, OLGA GONOPOLSKY, ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA INC., 28 EAST 28TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10016; TEL: 212-503-5438; FAX: 212-503-5420; E-MAIL: OLGA_GONOPOLSKY@ZIFFDAVIS.COM. FOR REPRINTS OR E-PRINTS, CONTACT REPRINT MANAGEMENT SERVICES AT 800-290-5460.

Audit Bureau of Circulations Member ABC AUDITED



SHARE THE ADVENTURE.



SHARE THE FANTASY.



# FINAL FANTASY® XI

ONLINE

INCLUDES BONUS *Rise of the Zilart* EXPANSION PACK

PlayOnline™

SQUARE ENIX.

www.playonline.com

Published by Square Enix U.S.A., Inc.

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Blood Violence

Game Experience May Change During Online Play

Coming to PlayStation®2

**Online play requires Internet connection. Users are responsible for all applicable Internet and subscription fees.**

© 2001-2003 SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD. All Rights Reserved. Title Design by Yoshitaka Amano. FINAL FANTASY is a registered trademark of Square Enix Co., Ltd. SQUARE ENIX, RISE OF THE ZILART, PLAYONLINE and the PlayOnline logo are trademarks of Square Enix Co., Ltd. Windows is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Pentium and the Intel Inside logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries. NVIDIA, the NVIDIA Logo and the Way It's Meant to be Played Logo are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of NVIDIA Corporation in the United States and other countries. "PlayStation" is a registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

Runs great on Intel Inside Pentium 4

The way it's meant to be played NVIDIA

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE for Windows®

# Letters

**Take a sad song and make it better at cgwletters@ziffdavis.com**

LETTER OF THE MONTH

## The Good Old Days

What ever happened to the good old days of the *CGW* letters section? I remember when it was free of any pictures of Jeff Green's stunt double, speedo-clad David Hasselhoff, and instead was filled with irate subscribers threatening not to renew their subscription unless you gave *Farscape* a five-star rating. The letters were always followed up with your reply pointing out their spelling and grammatical errors, in an attempt to put your otherwise unused "book lurnin" to good use. Ahh, I miss those days.....

**Jess**



P.S. Is Wil trying to look like Des'ree, or does he just look like that naturally?





### Journalists or fanboys?

I read your glowing preview of *World of WarCraft* in your October 2003 issue, as well as the grand statement on the cover, announcing *WOW* as essentially the only MMORPG that "won't suck." Just want to get a couple things straight. You make this statement about a game that is yet to be released, by a company that has zero experience with massive multiplayer games, and has just alienated a number of its top developers, after 1) playing for two days a game that should keep people hooked for months and years, 2) having only a bunch of nice, helpful game developers for company in a game that regular players will be sharing with several thousand folks, including every sort of griefer, cheater, scammer, and exploiter possible, and 3) seeing that game "feels more like a single-player RPG" and that most of the game is soloable. Right?

**Igor Obraztsov**

I was reading your *World of WarCraft* feature this month and I am fairly confident that your previews of *Star Wars Galaxies* were characterized by the same overly enthusiastic tone (although I did not bother to go reread those issues), and we all saw how that turned out. While game publishers and developers obviously want the media to focus only on the good, and I imagine that the majority of the reader base is only interested in the good when it comes to previews (do I care if there is crap coming down the pipe?), I believe it is your responsibility to give a completely objective picture when dealing with highly anticipated titles as *WOW* or *SWG*. There must be some issues bothering you, something that you are concerned that Blizzard might screw up.

**Yedidya**

**Good letters. We did indeed write a very glowing, happy preview of *World of WarCraft*, and, of course, it is definitely possible that the final product could disappoint. All we can tell you is we went in skeptical ourselves, after being burned by many MMORPGs, and liked what we saw. When you factor in Blizzard's nearly perfect track record, and the ample experience of all those involved, it inspires much confidence. But if the end result does disappoint, we won't hold back on our criticism—just like we didn't hold back with *Star Wars Galaxies*.**

### Thank you, Dr. Brainiac

For the love of gosh! Will you ever remember that "steep learning curve" is a good thing? It means you learn fast! Look:

```
Learning
 |          /
 |        /
 |      /
 |    /
 |  /
 |/
 |_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_ Time
```

The less time it takes to learn a game, the steeper the curve/line/whatever is. I learned that in primary school, so don't tell me you're not rocket scientists. OK? Steep curve = learning fast, not slow!

**SheldOn**

**"You should have a bit more discretion on some of the crap you throw in your mag."**

### Operation: Enduring Advertisements

What's this residing on page 105 of the

ILLUSTRATION BY SUPERCORN

# THERE'S NO KILL LIKE OVERKILL.




Meet the Lionhearts. A smack-talking rag-tag band of rebels bound on an impossible quest. With an arsenal of outrageous weapons, they're destined for victory in 12,000 bullets or less. If they can make it through an army of psychotic robots and wall-smashing Goliaths, they just might save the world...if they don't burn it down first.

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more ratings information.

XBOX

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

PLANET MOON STUDIOS

armed.lucasarts.com

LucasArts and the LucasArts logo are registered trademarks of Lucasfilm Ltd. © 2003 Lucasfilm Entertainment Company Ltd. and Planet Moon Studios & ® or TM as indicated. All rights reserved. Published by LucasArts. Developed by Planet Moon. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox Logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and / or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

LUCAS Arts

## MAIL BITES

**I didn't order your magazine but got an invoice. I will not pay. Please respond before I file suit. The next letter will be from my attorney**
Joseph M. Keenan

**Wil O'Neal is cooler than the other side of the pillow on a hot summer night. He's absolutely brilliant and I think that scares a lot of people.**
Strychnine

**Is it just me or is Robert Coffey a psychotic freak?**
Maddog

**Coffey, please get a different illustrator. I'm starting to have nightmares.**
Landshark

October 2003 issue? A full-page ad for some piece of pig crap with the apparently brave and haughty title *Conflict: Desert Storm II–Back to Baghdad*. The ad features several square-jawed, virtuous John Wayne-type American soldiers battling in the desert. At the top, in brave, bold letters is the phrase, "Freedom Will Endure."

What kind of jingoistic goat spoor is this? In the review of *Command & Conquer: Generals* a few issues ago, you panned the game for its stereotyping of races; one of the stereotypes in question was the idea of the square-jawed Americans, fighting desperately to defend their rights and their country, which is exactly the same thing portrayed in this ad. Pretty hypocritical.

The catchphrase "Freedom Will Endure" also misses the whole point of the Iraqi war, which is in fact just Bush throwing his weight around under the justification that it's for the good of all. I'm not arguing in support of Dictator Hussein, I'm just saying that you should have a bit more discretion on some of the pure crap you throw in your mag.

**Eric Davis**

***Sigh.* OK, let's go through this once more. We don't write the ads. We don't pick the ads. We don't even see the ads until the magazine comes out, just like you. Really. They're commercials, just like on television. We don't always like them all either. But without them, we have no job, and you have no magazine. So rip out the page, flip by without reading, whatever–just don't blame us.**

### What's "metric" mean?

I was reading the sidebar "*CGW* Goes to Boot Camp" in your article "World War II Shooter Showdown" [October 2003] when I noticed the following: "Dye comes out around 11:00 with a .45mm pistol and lies down on the ground."

I guess in America people don't know the metric system too well. There is no bullet that is .45 millimeters in diameter. I'm certain what you meant was .45 inches, which would be 11.43mm if converted to the metric system

Just wanted to point that out.

**Mick W.**



### No cyber cafes for Americans?

As a musician, I've been lucky enough to travel around the world and play online games in a variety of environments. Your article on cyber cafés in the September 2003 issue brought back some vivid memories of playing *Diablo II* in Korean cafes.

There, most people don't have Internet access at home (or didn't in 2001), and there was a café virtually on every block. They were open 24 hours a day, and in Seoul some were as large as there floors. They were always full and the games were lively, to say the least. Back then *StarCraft* and *Diablo* were the favorites. There was no crime, and no animosity between players, even though you had large groups playing in the same games, including all the FPS games. It also cost about 80 cents an hour, and the folks running the café would often bring free snacks and coffee to the players.

It's unfortunate this will never happen in America. Too much insurance and the poor attitude of many of the kids in our society will prevent gaming cafés from ever becoming popular or successful in America. That's too bad, because there's nothing as cool as the charged atmosphere of 30 people in the same room, playing in the same games.

**TomC**

**Actually, the point of our article was that cyber cafés were indeed starting to make inroads in this country, so we hope you're wrong. And we agree with the appeal. Some of the most memorable gaming moments that we've ever had have been during the multiplayer matches on our internal LAN.**

### This space for sale

Want confirmation that gaming is headed right into the toilet? No problem. Take a look at *PlanetSide*. Every time the game loads now an advertisement for Intel is in the corner. Of course, this has just made most of us stronger supporters of AMD. I can't wait for *EverQuest II*, to see everyone running around with "Intel Inside" in shiny neon green tattooed on the back of everyone's head.

**John McCoy**

### RPG withdrawal

I have been suffering serious withdrawals. Will there never be an RPG like *Planescape: Torment* again? It was the greatest masterpiece of an RPG I've ever seen (with the one possible exception of *Deus Ex*) and there hasn't been one as good since. *Baldur's Gate II, Arcanum, Nox, Neverwinter Nights*–none quite measure up, and most don't ever get close to *Planescape: Torment*. Do you guys think there is anything out there now or on its way that could beat *Planescape*? Any suggestions would be appreciated, thanks.

**Noah Hallett**

**We definitely agree with you that *Planescape: Torment* was an awesome game. It just narrowly missed being named our Game of the Year in 2000, losing out in a tie-breaking second ballot to *Unreal Tournament*. As far as must-have new or upcoming RPGs go, we've been playing Bioware's *Knights of the Old Republic* on the Xbox, and it is amazing. Don't worry–the PC version is coming soon.**

### No, really, we didn't make these up!

You guys are the best. Your magazine is awesome, your reviews are always dead on, and you guys have the funniest mag ever! I look forward every month to see what game Tom and Bruce will battle at. And it's always nice to know that your CDs will always work right! Keep up the good work!

**jeff thigpen**

When I first got your magazine, I was a little bit skeptical. Your articles seemed long and boring, but once I started reading them I saw how well put together and clean they were. I've only been a subscriber this year, and I now keep your mag as the best. It also is just the right length. I always stick my

**"Will there never be an RPG like *Planescape: Torment* again?"**

# Counter-Strike™ and Xbox *Live*.
# A match made in "holy-*#!%-did-you-see-that" heaven.



MATURE 17+
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Blood
Intense Violence

Microsoft game studios
VALVE




Counter-Strike,™ the world's #1 online action game*, is even better on Xbox *Live*.™ With graphically superior action, 7 exclusive maps, up to 16 player game play and a vast arsenal of weapons, this is the best Counter-Strike yet. You may want to practice offline before you enter the merciless online arena. Here, you can go it alone or you can assemble an elite team of gamers and talk strategy over the *Live* Communicator on how to defuse bombs, rescue hostages and take on terrorists from all over the world. The competition will be tough, so you'd better come prepared.

XBOX LIVE

COUNTER STRIKE™

XBOX

it's good to play together

xbox.com/counterstrike

©2003 Valve Corporation. Portions © & ® Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, the Microsoft Game Studios logo, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Xbox Live logo, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Counter-Strike, the Counter-Strike logo, Valve, and the Valve logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Valve Corporation, in the United States and/or other countries. *Source GameSpy 09/02/03. GameSpy stats for multiplayer online action games.

## MAIL BITES

**Oh man, that pic of David Hasselhoff in your October letters section was sexy!**
Sam Allison

**Jeff Green, Robert Coffey, and the CGW staff deserve some f***in' respect, so let's all show 'em some love.**
Pimpin J

**Why don't you convince Wil to drop the drugs... drop the Dells...and give SERIOUS gamers what they really want- SPEED AND POWER!!!!**
Doug Davis

**I like your magazine. It's just too bad that someone keeps wiping his ass on the last page.**
Astion

favorite mag in the bathroom after I get it so I can read everything. Your mag I always finish the day the next issue comes. I can't think of anything more perfect. Keep up the good work and keep your noses clean.

**Bryson**

P.S. You should send me a copy of *Half-Life 2* when you get it.

I have been reading gaming mags for about 10 years, which is about two years longer than I have been gaming on a PC, and your October 2003 issue is the best I've read to date. Your magazine has been getting increasingly better for the last couple of years. Keep up the good work.

**Warlord Grimgore Ironhide**

P.S. When *World of WarCraft* launches, I will afford all your writers and editors quick deaths at the hands of my Orc warlord (an honor reserved for only the most worthy foe).

### Robert's pleonastic vocabulary

I have read your magazine for a good many years; I have loved the reviews, the bad jokes, the idiots who write in, and many other things. It has also come to my attention that Jeff Green doesn't write in the back anymore. Rather, one Robert Coffey writes back there. This was no cause for concern, as Jeff let us know that this was happening. With Robert coming in, not much changed with that back page. The only thing that really changed was the incredibly bombastic speech that Robert brought in.

This, too, was no cause for concern; it was something to celebrate. Someone at *CGW* that could actually write with big words! Wow! Then I read a review that Robert had done, and I must say that Robert should have been an author, not a reviewer. I read his review of *Postal 2*. It seems that our ingenious friend here managed to use the entire dictionary to describe how much the game sucked. Poor Robert forgot to leave in the details on why the game sucked. Robert, you're a great writer and have a wonderful vocabulary, but please, when you review a game that sucks, tell us the details on the graphics and the game itself and why it sucks, not just why you think it sucks because of all of its vulgar pictures and the like.

**George**

**"*Dragon Empires* looks like an oasis amidst a land of stagnant cesspools."**

### New hope for Sambo

My compliments and thanks for your wonderful segment about MMORPGs in your September 2003 issue. Mark Asher has restored my faith in online gaming. I am an old school gamer (*Wing Commander, Privateer, Commander Keen*, etc.), and while I am still playing the latest games, I have found that there just aren't that many that rekindle my old excitement I once had for gaming. After reading Mark's article, I looked up *Dragon Empires*, and didn't stop reading stuff about it until eight hours later! This game has me so excited that I feel like I am a kid again. I hope it pans out, because I couldn't handle the disappointments from a game that has so much potential. *Dragon Empires* truly looks like a sparkling oasis amidst a land of stagnant cesspools.

**sambo**



Scooter waves goodbye to *CGW*.

### Whither Scooter

OK, NOW I'm mad! Where's everyone going? Tom, Chim-Chim, Greenspeak (yeah, I know it's not a person, but I'm still pissed) and now SCOOTER? What's next? I swear to God, if another one of you leaves, I will...well, I guess I'll just bitch and moan some more.

Congrats on an awesome mag, except for your review on *Star Wars Galaxies*, which is the best MMORPG ever! Not that that's saying much, but seriously, too complicated??? I don't know, guys.

**Grant Kindt**

Scooter's leaving?! WTF! This is the worst thing to happen to *CGW* since Jeff stopped writing Greenspeak! Maybe as a parting gift you could tell us how to pronounce "Thierry Nguyen"? (Whatever you do, do not say it's pronounced "SCOO-ter.") I'll miss you, buddy.

**Andrew Schran**

**OK, OK. Now that he's gone, we'll finally clue you in as to how to pronounce his name, for real. First name: "dumb." Last name : "ass."**

### No love for smacktards

Do you realize that the Dirtiest Trick of the Month prize [Gamer's Edge, October 2003] went to a team-killer/griefer? You can't hijack an enemy Galaxy in *Planet-Side* and crash it in the way he described it—you can only steal your own team's Galaxy that way. All the guys he ejects over water, and thereby kills, or maroons on an island, are on his own empire, his own team. Guys like him ruin online gaming and are in the same league with spammers, wallhackers, and maphackers. I can't believe you'd reward someone for being such a team-killing smacktard.

**Wesley Hinkley**

### Another crazy guy

I read every single one of Robert Coffey's reviews. Once I was reading his section in the back of the issue and I was laughing so hard I started crying. Every time I open a new issue, I flip right to the back to see what he wrote about this time (I throw the rest of the magazine in the corner of my room). Every time I start roaring with laughter, my mother gets angry at me for being too loud. You are a great editor, Robert, my favorite, and I can't wait to see what you are going to write about next...

**Nevin Ray**

### For the record

In the How To article entitled "Colonel Bombast's Dissertation on Military Terminology" in our October 2003 issue, all the screenshots were all taken from *Sid Meier's Gettysburg*, developed by Firaxis Games and published by EA.

The *Civilization III: Conquests* preview, also in the October 2003 issue, should have stated that the game is a turn-based strategy game with seven new civilizations, 30 new resources, eight new governments, 85 new technologies, 50 new units, and 60 new buildings.


FOR A LORD, THERE IS ONLY
ONE PATH TO GLORY.

Grab a Free Lords of EverQuest™ Demo Disc at your local software retailer*

# THE PATH







www.lordsofeverquest.com

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Blood and Gore Violence

Game experience may change during online play

PC CD ROM

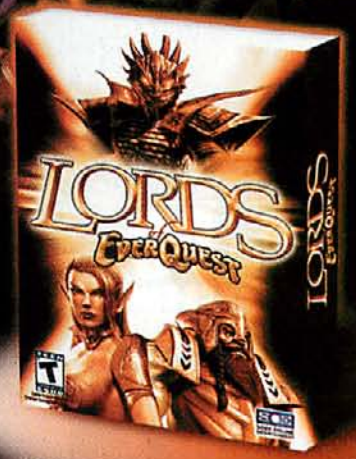
RAPID EYE ENTERTAINMENT

SOE SONY ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT

In the lost age of Norrath, three powerful Empires will join in battle! Only one will emerge victorious from this epic war, so choose your strategies wisely. War Calls. Answer with Force!

# OF WAR.






- † Three Diverse Empires
- † Three Epic Campaigns
- † Fifteen Customizable Lords
- † Hundreds of Units, Weapons, Spells, and More
- † Free online Multiplayer Gameplay

# LORDS of EverQuest™

A Revolutionary RTS Experience Awaits!

© 2003 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Lords of EverQuest is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. SOE and the SOE logo are registered trademarks of Sony Online Entertainment Inc. Rapid Eye Entertainment and its distinctive logo are trademarks of Rapid Eye Entertainment, Inc. All other trademarks or trade names are properties of their respective owners. All rights reserved.

# HORIZONS

## Empire of Istaria

IGN Vault Network — Best of E3

Daily Game — E3 2003 — Best of Show

IGN Vault Network — E3 2003 Game Of Show

TEEN T — Violence — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

INTERNET CONNECTION REQUIRED
ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTION FEES REQUIRED

artifact entertainment

ATARI

Horizons © 2003 Artifact Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. All trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Developed, Operated, Hosted and Maintained by Artifact Entertainment. Powered by the "Evolution Engine"™








massively multiplayer...
...from a different point of view.
WWW.ISTARIA.COM







# EMPIRES

## DAWN OF THE MODERN WORLD™




WORLD WAR II

ACTIVISION.

activision.com

POWERED BY gamespy.

STAINLESS STEEL STUDIOS™

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Violence

© 2003 Stainless Steel Studios. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. Empires: Dawn of the Modern World is a trademark of Stainless Steel Studios. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. GameSpy and the "Powered by GameSpy" design are trademarks of GameSpy Industries, Inc. All rights reserved. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

# ONE BATTLE CAN CHANGE THE FATE OF A NATION. 1,000 YEARS OF WARFARE CAN CHANGE THE FATE OF THE WORLD.

From thundering cavalry charges to roaring blitzkriegs, command spectacular battles from the Medieval Age through WWII. Rule one of the world's seven mightiest civilizations, armed with realistic weaponry, powerful technologies and unique military and economic abilities. Build an empire to conquer the globe and rule the ages.



## MEDIEVAL AGE

**Command** your nation in lightning warfare, strategic, long-term empire building or online Multiplayer action.



## GUNPOWDER AGE

**Rule** as history's greatest heroes in 3 story-driven adventures. Overcome conspiracies and intrigue to guide your empire to greatness.



## IMPERIAL AGE

**Lead** 1 of 7 completely distinctive civilizations through 1,000 years of history in dramatic land, air and sea battles.



## WORLD WAR I

Get a **general's eye view** of the action with a rotatable, zoom-capable camera, detailed 3D graphics and amazing in-game cinematics.

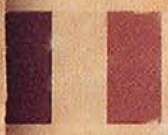





Rifle infantry and machine gunners man pillboxes.



RUSSIA



FRANCE



KOREA



GERMANY



USA



ENGLAND



CHINA

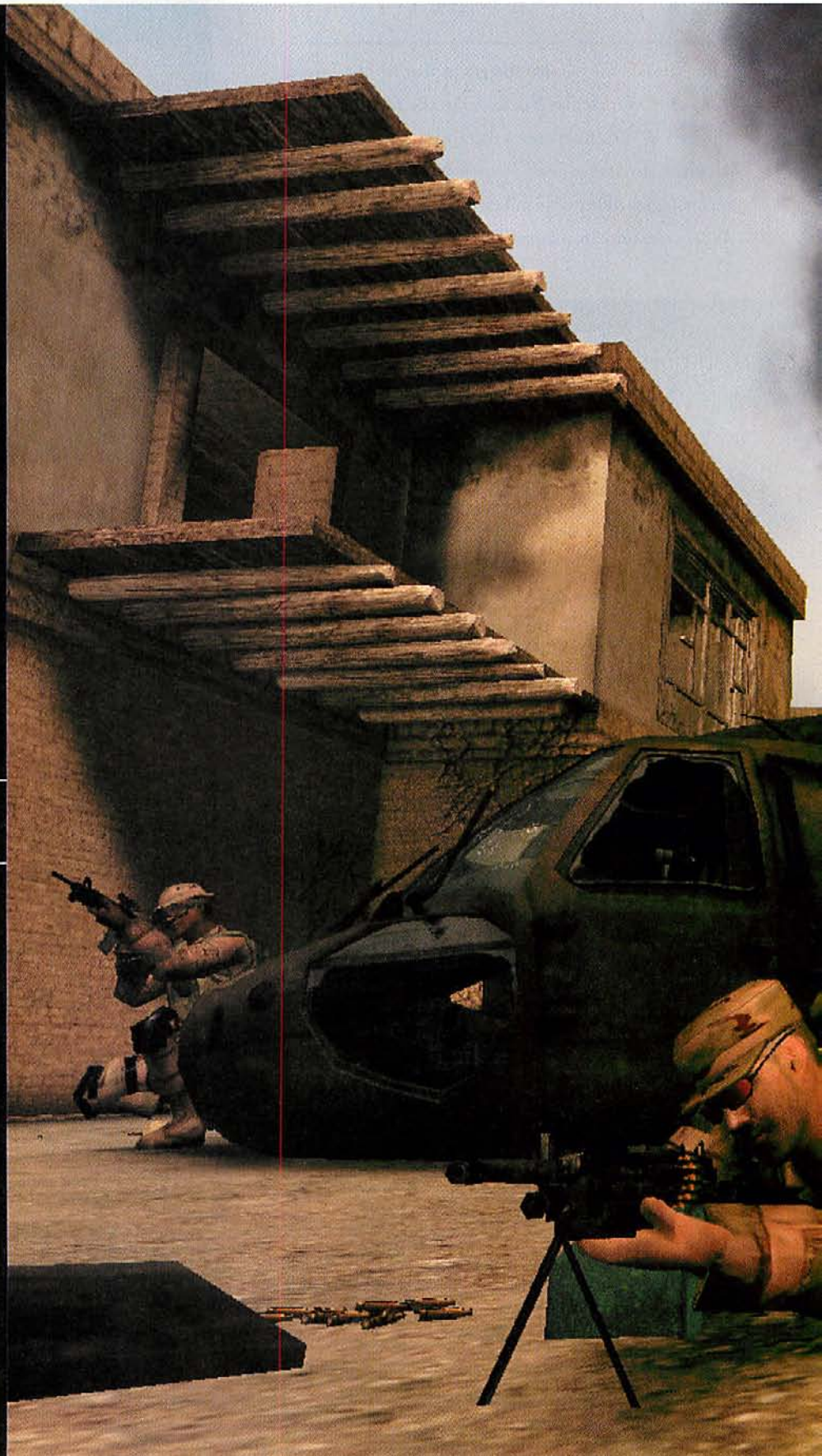
COMMAND THE DEEPEST RTS IN HISTORY.

COMING THIS FALL.

EMPIRESRTS.COM

# Loading...

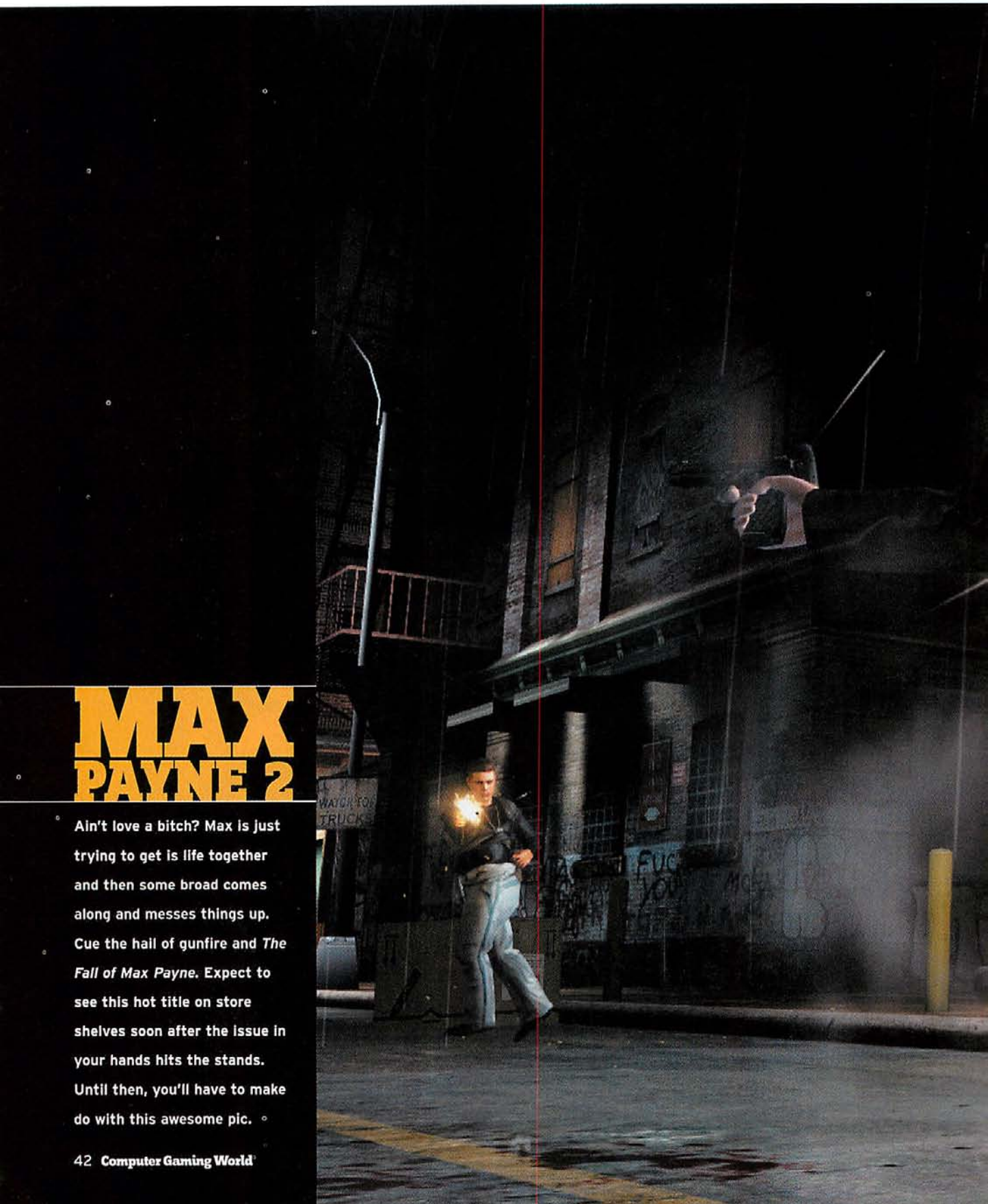
**The hottest shots of the best new games** Edited by Darren Gladstone



## AMERICA'S ARMY 2.0

Take that, *Rainbow Six*! As a tribute to one of the best-looking free games out there, we're showing you a screen from the newest *America's Army*. Called *Special Forces*, the new build will be out and available for download by the time this issue hits stands, so be sure to check out our Read Me story on page 50. Better yet, go to www.americasarmy.com and download it. That is all—at ease.





# MAX PAYNE 2

Ain't love a bitch? Max is just trying to get is life together and then some broad comes along and messes things up. Cue the hail of gunfire and *The Fall of Max Payne*. Expect to see this hot title on store shelves soon after the issue in your hands hits the stands. Until then, you'll have to make do with this awesome pic.


MARKET

NEW

## DIMENSION™ XPS



**Ultimate Gaming PC**

- Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor with HT Technology at 2.80GHz with 800MHz Front Side Bus
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
- 512MB Dual Channel DDR SDRAM at 400MHz
- 80GB Ultra ATA/100 Hard Drive (7200 RPM)
- 19" (18.0" v.i.s., .24dp) M992 Monitor
- 128MB DDR ATI® RADEON™ 9800 Graphics Card with TV-Out and DVI
- 16x DVD-ROM Drive
- Sound Blaster® Audigy™ 2 Sound Card with DVD Audio
- Speakers Not Included
- Integrated Intel® PRO 10/100 Ethernet
- WordPerfect® Productivity Pack with Quicken® New User Edition
- 1-Yr Limited Warranty* with XPS Telephone Support, 1-Yr At-Home Service*

**$2039** as low as $62/mo.*
**E-VALUE Code: 19093-D51020m**

### WANT EVEN MORE JUICE?

***Add more cutting-edge technology to your XPS system.***

- Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor with HT Technology at 3GHz with 800MHz Front Side Bus
- 1GB Dual Channel DDR SDRAM at 400MHz
- NEW 240GB SATA RAID 0 (Data Striping)
- 4x CD/DVD Burner (DVD+RW/+R* Drive) (2nd Bay)
- 128MB DDR ATI® RADEON™ 9800 PRO Graphics Card with TV-Out and DVI
- Dell Gigabit Ethernet*
- 2-Yr Limited Warranty* with XPS Telephone Support, 2-Yr At-Home Service*

**$3249** as low as $98/mo.*
**E-VALUE Code: 19093-D51032m**

AWARD
CUP OF DROOL AWARD
www.gamersdepot.com
Dimension XPS
April 28, 2003

NEW

## INSPIRON™ 8600



**Ultimate Mobile Gaming Powerhouse**

Intel® Centrino® Mobile Technology

- Intel® Pentium® M at 1.70GHz
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
- 15.4" UltraSharp™ Wide Screen UXGA TFT Display
- 768MB DDR PC2700 SDRAM
- 80GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 24x CD Burner/DVD Combo Drive
- 128MB DDR NVIDIA® GeForceFX™ Go5650 Graphics
- Front-Mounted Stereo Speakers for a Complete Multimedia Experience
- 72Whr Li-Ion Battery with ExpressCharge™ Technology (9 cell)
- Internal Fax Modem and NIC Included
- Intel® PRO 2100 802.11b Mini-PCI Wireless Card
- WordPerfect® Productivity Pack with Quicken® New User Edition
- 6 Months of America Online® Membership Included*
- 1-Yr Limited Warranty*, 1-Yr Mail-In Service

**$2989** as low as $90/mo.*
**E-VALUE Code: 19093-D81029m**

### TAKE IT UP A LEVEL

***Add more cutting-edge technology to your Inspiron system.***

- 4x CD/DVD Burner (DVD+RW/+R* Drive), add $249
- 1GB DDR PC2700 SDRAM, add $150
- 3-Yr Limited Warranty*, 3-Yr At-Home Service*, add $269

**Dell recommends Microsoft® Windows® XP**

## Software & Peripherals

**Games. Joysticks. Dell can help you load up on all kinds of game gear!**

- Logitech® Z680 5.1 Speaker System, $315
- Logitech® MX 700 Cordless Optical Mouse, $69
- Belkin® Nostromo n50 USB SpeedPad, $26
- Plantronics® DSP-400 Stereo PC Headset, $63
- Logitech® MOMO Force Gaming Wheel, $129
- Unreal II®: The Awakening, $39
- Gravis GamePad Pro USB, $19
- Logitech® Freedom 2.4 Cordless Joystick, $63 (shown below)






# Click www.dell4me.com/cgw

## >>>Call 1-877-311-3355

toll free

*America Online: New members only. Must register for America Online dial-up service within 30 days of date of invoice. To avoid paying monthly membership fees, cancel during the 6-month promotional period. Even during promo period, telephone access charges on your phone bill (call your phone company for details) and surcharges for premium services and 800-number access may apply, including in AK. For new, 18+ U.S. members with major credit card or checking account only. Limited time offer. America Online, AOL, the Triangle design and AOL Instant Messenger service are registered trademarks of America Online, Inc. **Pricing/Availability:** Prices, specifications, availability and terms of offers may change without notice. Taxes and shipping charges are extra, and vary. Valid for U.S. Dell Home Systems Co. new purchases only. Dell cannot be responsible for errors in typography or photography. **Gigabit Ethernet:** This term indicates compliance with IEEE standard 802.3ab for Gigabit Ethernet, and does not connote actual operating speed of 1 GB/sec. For high speed transmission connection to a Gigabit Ethernet server and network infrastructure is required. **Software:** Software, documentation or packaging may differ from retail versions. **Limited Warranty:** You can get a copy of

# Dell Gaming PCs:

## Machines that redefine the term

# adrenaline rush.



*Unreal II™: The Awakening*
*An intense epic adventure featuring superb graphics.*

Unleash the full power of your games with Dell PCs. Dimension XPS Desktops. Inspiron 8600 Notebooks. Machines custom built just the way you want them. Machines that make serious gaming more affordable. Machines that fear no droid, no alien, and no undead. Machines built with the latest technology to blur the line between game and reality. Go online or call now and get a machine that brings to life an enemy. A machine that lets you hear what lurks in the darkness. A machine that's been pushed to the limits of testing—both inside and out—to perform in the real world, and the world that consumes your mind. Service and support is available 24/7/365. But the nightmares you get from the games are your own problem.

**Intense Gaming. Easy as DELL™**

our limited warranties and guarantees by writing Dell USA LP, Attn: Warranties, One Dell Way, Round Rock, TX 78682. To purchase warranty only or for information on other service options please call 1-800-915-3355 or visit www.dell4me.com/termsandconditions. **Service:** At-Home service provided via third-party contract with customer. Technician will be dispatched, if necessary, following phone-based troubleshooting. Availability varies. Other conditions apply. **DVD+ RW and DVD+RW/+R Drives:** Discs burned with this drive may not be compatible with some existing drives and players; using DVD+R media provides maximum compatibility. **PURCHASE PLAN: Dell Preferred Account:** Offered by CIT Bank to qualified U.S. residents with approved credit. Taxes and shipping charges are extra and vary. **Trademarks/Copyright Notices:** Intel, Intel Inside, Pentium and Celeron are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries. Microsoft and Windows are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. ©2003 Dell Inc. All rights reserved.


REINVENTING
Continue the adventure online at www.UruLive.com
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for Rating Information.
PC
CD-ROM
SOFTWARE
Play It On
ubi.com
CYAN

# MYST...

# URU™

## AGES BEYOND MYST.

FROM THE CREATORS OF MYST® & RIVEN™

With real-time 3D and the power to create a customized, personal avatar based on your own likeness, Uru lets you explore the world of MYST with more freedom than ever before. This is just one way the creators at Cyan Worlds have reinvented one of the most captivating adventure series of all time. Don't just go ages beyond other adventure games. Go ages beyond MYST.



Real-time 3D graphics, 3D positional sound, dynamic lighting, skin mesh animations, and more.



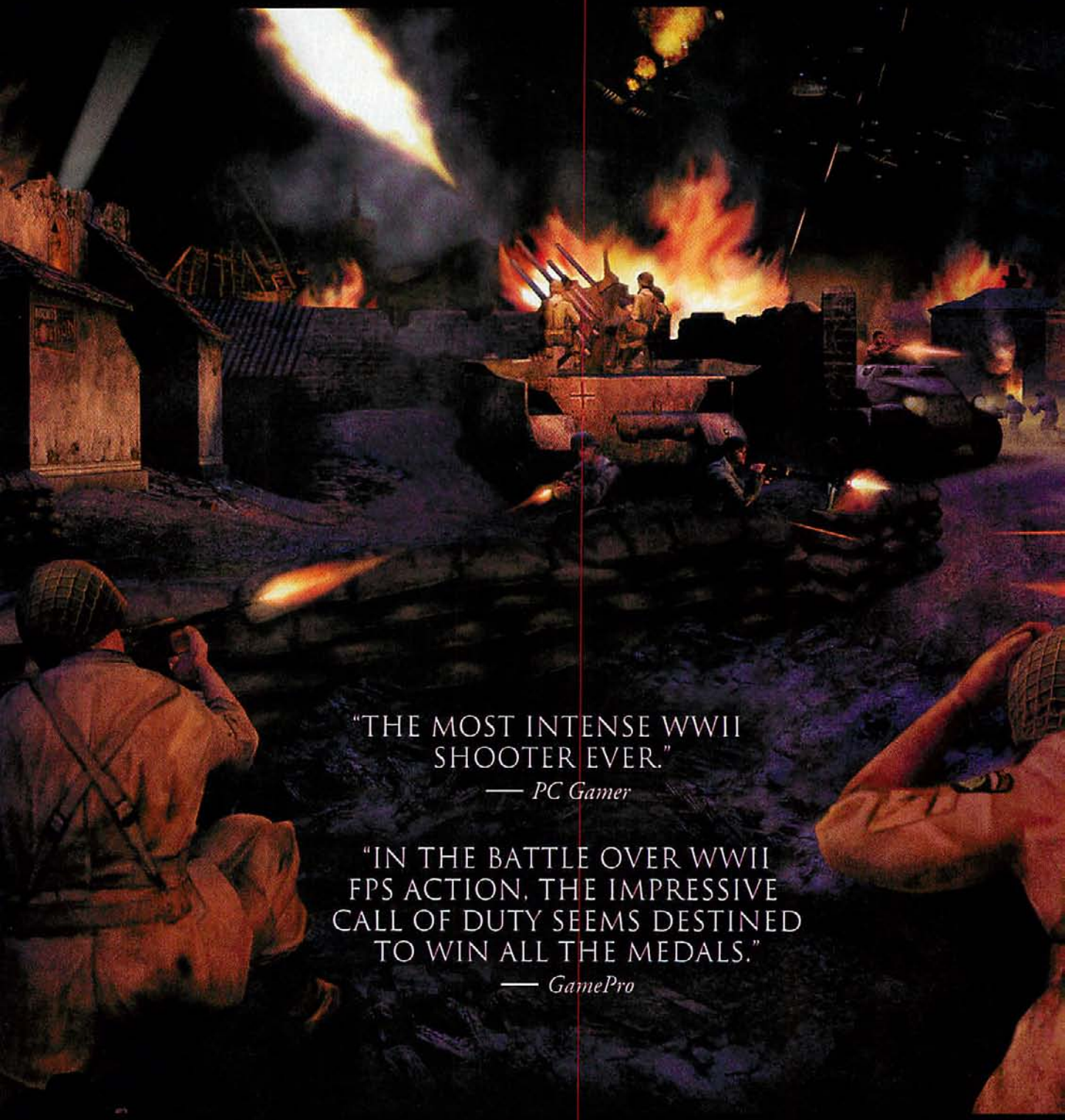
Create and customize a personal avatar based on your own likeness.



Play an integral role in uncovering the mysteries of the D'ni civilization.

UBISOFT™

# IN THE WAR THAT CHANGED THE WORLD...



"THE MOST INTENSE WWII SHOOTER EVER."
— *PC Gamer*

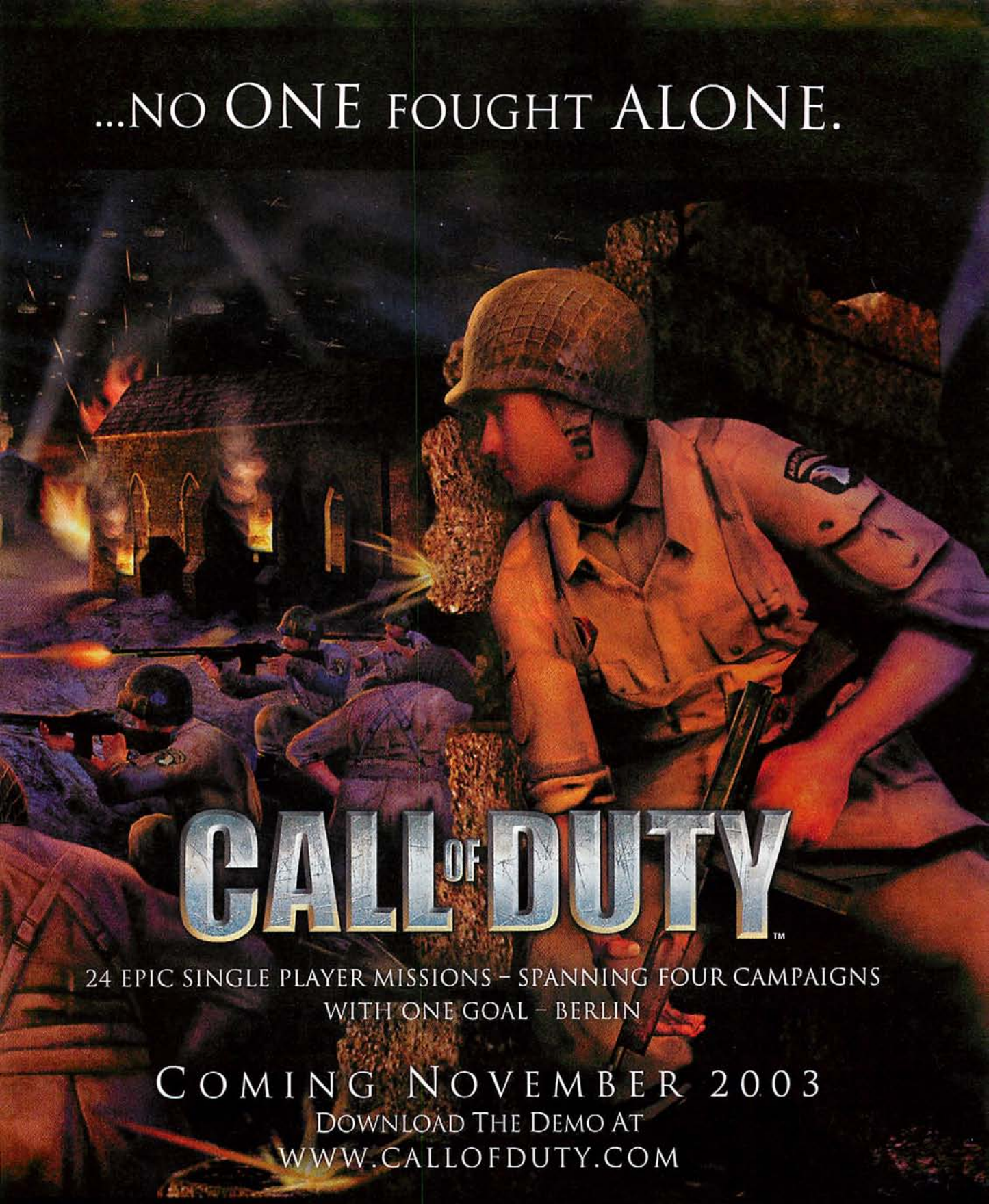
"IN THE BATTLE OVER WWII FPS ACTION, THE IMPRESSIVE CALL OF DUTY SEEMS DESTINED TO WIN ALL THE MEDALS."
— *GamePro*

BEST OF E3 2003 NOMINEE

*Best PC Game*
*Best Action Game*

*Top Games Of E3*

# ...NO ONE FOUGHT ALONE.



# CALL OF DUTY™

24 EPIC SINGLE PLAYER MISSIONS - SPANNING FOUR CAMPAIGNS
WITH ONE GOAL - BERLIN

## COMING NOVEMBER 2003

DOWNLOAD THE DEMO AT
WWW.CALLOFDUTY.COM

ACTIVISION.

infinity ward

The way it's meant to be played
NVIDIA

SOUNDS BEST ON
Sound BLASTER 24-bit ADVANCED HD

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Blood
Violence

PC
CD-ROM
SOFTWARE

© 2003 Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark and Call of Duty is a trademark of Activision, Inc., and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Developed by Infinity Ward, Inc. This product contains software technology licensed from Id Software ("Id Technology"). Id Technology © 1999-2000 Id Software, Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

# Read Me

**The front lines of the gaming scene** **Edited by Ken Brown**



Here's one of the new Special Forces characters and a special purpose rifle that will appear in *America's Army 2.0*.

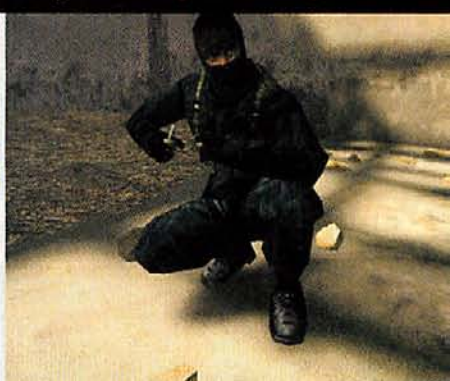
RECON

# Simulated Warfare

**Special Forces training at Fort McClellan for America's Army: 2.0** **By Johnny Liu**







INSIDE



**UT2004**
You asked for it, you got it: Assault is back!
Page 53



**NEVERWINTER ADD-ON**
A graphical improvement and a new campaign. Page 62



**JOAN OF ARC**
Are you man enough to fight like a woman? Page 58

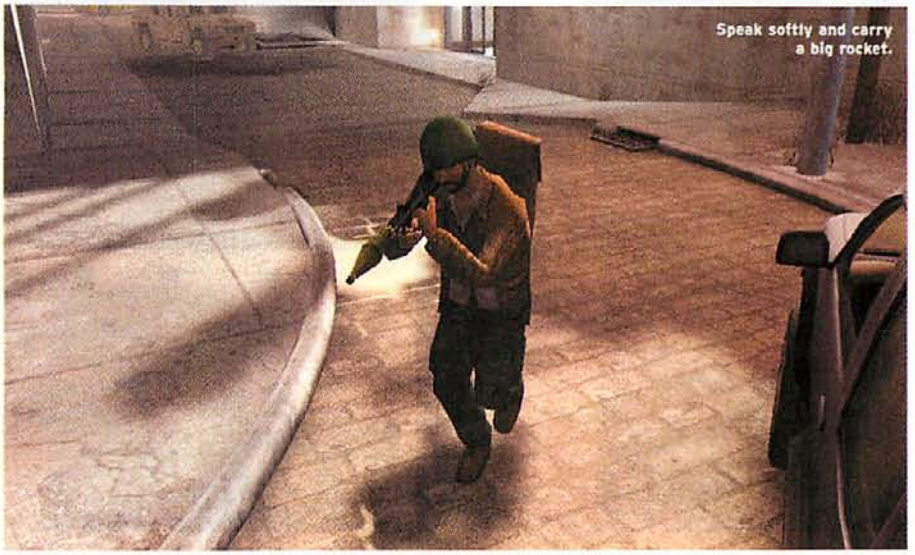



**BLUE WIZARD**
A poetic license to kill.
Page 66

The ritual of hazing is alive and well in the offices of *CGW*. As the new assistant editor, I somehow was the lucky one assigned to go to sweet home Alabama, home of country-fried hospitality and training grounds of the Special Forces Advanced Urban Combat Training Division at Fort McClellan. Fortunately, they didn't decide to make me a target in their Shoothouse. Instead, I was able to get an up-close look at the intensive training process it takes to become a Green Beret. Members of the *America's Army* development team were also there to conduct extensive research for the two-part expansion, *America's Army: Special Forces*.

The first part of the expansion drops somewhere in mid to late October and will feature new single-player objectives that adhere to real-life Special Forces training. Running on the most current version of the *Unreal* engine (the same as *UT2004*), "Version 2.0" of *America's Army* boasts improved character models and implementation of a host of new Special Forces weaponry, including incendiary grenades and the M4A1 SOPMOD (which includes a grenade launcher, scopes, and other attachments to increase the rifle's effectiveness).

On the last research excursion, which made the trek from Fort Bragg to a Stryker unit to Fort McClellan, the development team filled three 512MB photo cards of unit, vehicle, and weaponry images—that amounts to some 1,500 pictures. In addition, a soundman who worked on *The Matrix* film was drafted to record the fires of real weaponry; many of these guns have never previously been recorded.


Speak softly and carry a big rocket.


Skies are cloudy, with a chance of bullet showers.

## New missions include recovering soldiers from a downed Blackhawk helicopter.

### A few good details

During the exercises, Major Randy Zeegers, an active duty soldier with heavy input on the project, turns to director of development Jesse McCree and says, "Do you see this watch? Each of us in the 20th wears this Suunto watch. You have to get this in."

McCree replies, "The soldiers in the game are all wearing gloves, but I think we can stick it into a lecture situation, when the instructor raises his arms." Some of the training stages within the game will take place in a classroom, such as vehicle, aircraft, and weapons identification.

Suddenly a boom roars in the distance. I almost drop everything I'm holding—notebook, camera, everything in my stomach. Zeegers doesn't even flinch.

The explosion comes from the "Shoothouse," a makeshift building with walls that can be swapped around, creating different layouts and situations for trainees. Almost all of the men training here have just come back from a tour in Afghanistan.

Seconds later, a second explosion detonates ten feet away from me. I'm on the observation deck, weighed down by heavy blast gear, as soldiers storm in to retrieve a laptop computer—an exercise that actually reflects a mission in the original release of *America's Army*. Andrew Boulton, a level designer, stands nearby, taping everything.

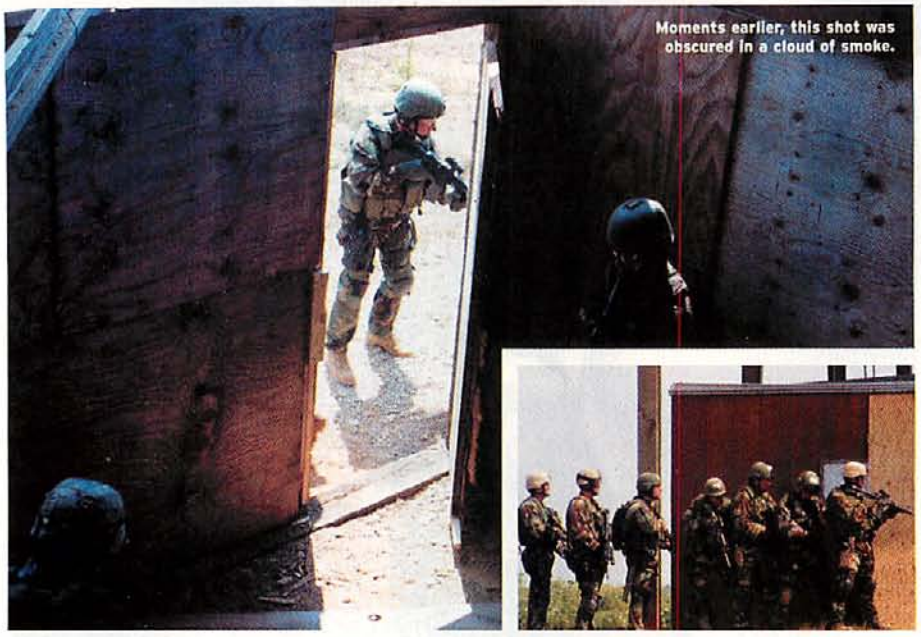
Both explosions are doors being blown open to let the team enter. McCree turns back to Zeegers, pointing out the explosion. "Right now, I've even included how the soldiers time the detonation countdown, with the arm on the shoulder..."

Zeegers cuts him off, "Well, don't give away all our secrets."

### Full metal upgrade

The first edition of *America's Army* was released, by no mere





Moments earlier, this shot was obscured in a cloud of smoke.



coincidence, on July 4, 2002. Since then, the game has been downloaded millions of times, and numerous updates have been released. "After the release of the first game, which focused on infantry units, we felt the time was right to bring in the Special Forces element, especially with the high levels of interest in recent foreign conflicts," says Carter.

"Special Forces are intelligent, physically fit, skilled in foreign languages. The members are leaders that can act independently, not just infantry with better gadgets." New missions will reflect this core value, with operations that include recovering soldiers from a downed Blackhawk helicopter to nighttime reconnaissance. On the multiplayer side, an updated version of popular map Pipeline will take advantage of the new Special Forces equipment.

As to whether games might be made depicting other branches of the military, it doesn't seem likely right now. Chris Carter says, "While the other branches all came to us and wanted to know more about the project, the ground troop nature of the Army is most well suited for the first-person shooter."

As an afterthought, he adds, "Maybe in a Navy game, they'd let you swab some decks."

Despite the occasional wisecracks, it is clear during my visit that these guys are very serious about their simulations. From the numerous gigs of photos, sounds, and information pulled directly from the field to the many soldiers pitching their voices into the project, *America's Army* will continue to boast an exceptional level of military accuracy. And t he upcoming Special Forces expansion will add another exciting glimpse into our nation's military–free for all to download.

## NEWS FEED



### FREEDOM FORCE 2

After defeating Nuclear Winter, The Shadow, Mr. Mechanical, and the nefarious Time Master, the heroes of Patriot City are coming back to take on everyone's favorite foe: the Nazis. Irrational Games, developers of *System Shock 2*, are preparing to release *Freedom Force Versus the Third Reich* by spring 2004. The sequel will deliver the same comic book-style tactical strategy as the original did, but the new game will feature new heroes and villains, an improved combat system, and spiffy graphic enhancements, according to Irrational.

In the sequel, the league of heroes travels back in time to defeat Blitzkrieg, defender of the Reich. Irrational's Ken Levine says that the game will have improved A.I. that needs less micromanagement and supports more independent character movement.




### QUEST FOR SADDAM

If you're frustrated that the U.S. Army still hasn't bagged the Ace of Spades, you can try your own luck in *Quest for Saddam*. The multilevel shooter lets you hunt down the former Iraqi dictator in Iraq, and rewards you with low-brow gags and absurd scenes, like Saddam and Osama bin Laden in a hot tub. The graphics are worse than those in many free mods, and the content will be offensive to some, but if you don't mind paying $15 for a game that looks like *Redneck Rampage*, it might be good for a few yucks. You can download it from www.questforsaddam.com.

## REALITY CHECK

Reality Check compares the ratings of major gaming press with GameRankings.com, which averages all published reviews for a particular title.

| GAME | CGW | PC Gamer | CGM | Gamespot.com | IGN.com | Gamespy | GameRankings.com |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Madden NFL 2004 | A | n/a | A+ | A- | A | B+ | A- |
| Tron 2.0 | A | A | A | B- | B+ | A- | A- |
| Age of Wonders: Shadow Magic | A | A | B+ | A- | A- | A- | B+ |
| Lionheart: Legacy of the Crusader | D- | C | C- | C+ | C+ | C+ | C+ |
| Ghost Master | B- | n/a | B- | A- | B- | A- | B |






ONLY ONE WILL RULE
LORDS
of EverQuest™


ORDS MAY LEAD.
Blood and Gore
Violence
RAPID EYE ENTERTAINMENT
SOE
SONY ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT
experience may change
online play





# WAR CALLS! AN

# LO

## Eve



Ten thousand years ago, three po
continent of Antonica. Using
diverse races, the mighty Lords o
and Shadowrealm launched an e
EverQuest. Heed the call of



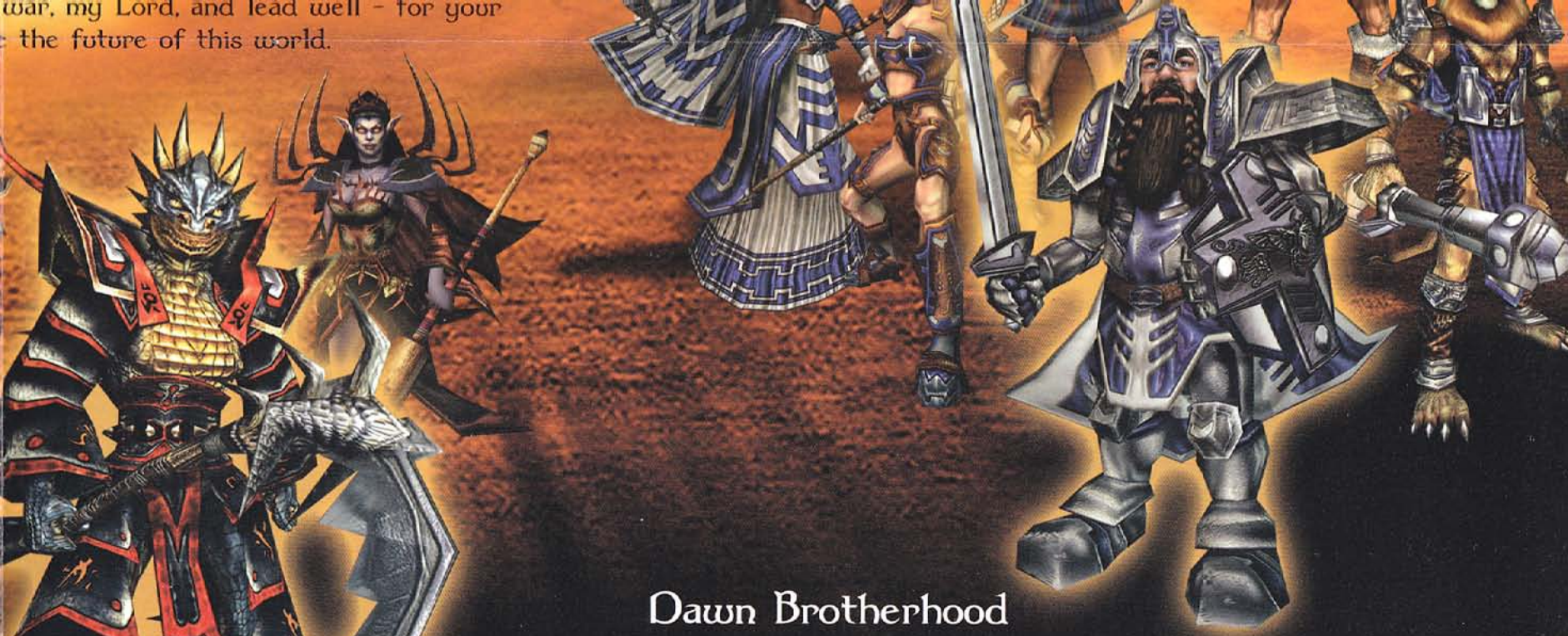


# SWER WITH FORCE!

# RDS
## of RQUEST™

owerful factions battled for control of the
forces and strategies as unique as their
of the Elddar Alliance, Dawn Brotherhood,
pic war that lives forever in the lore of
war, my Lord, and lead well - for your
the future of this world.

war, my Lord, and lead well - for your
the future of this world.

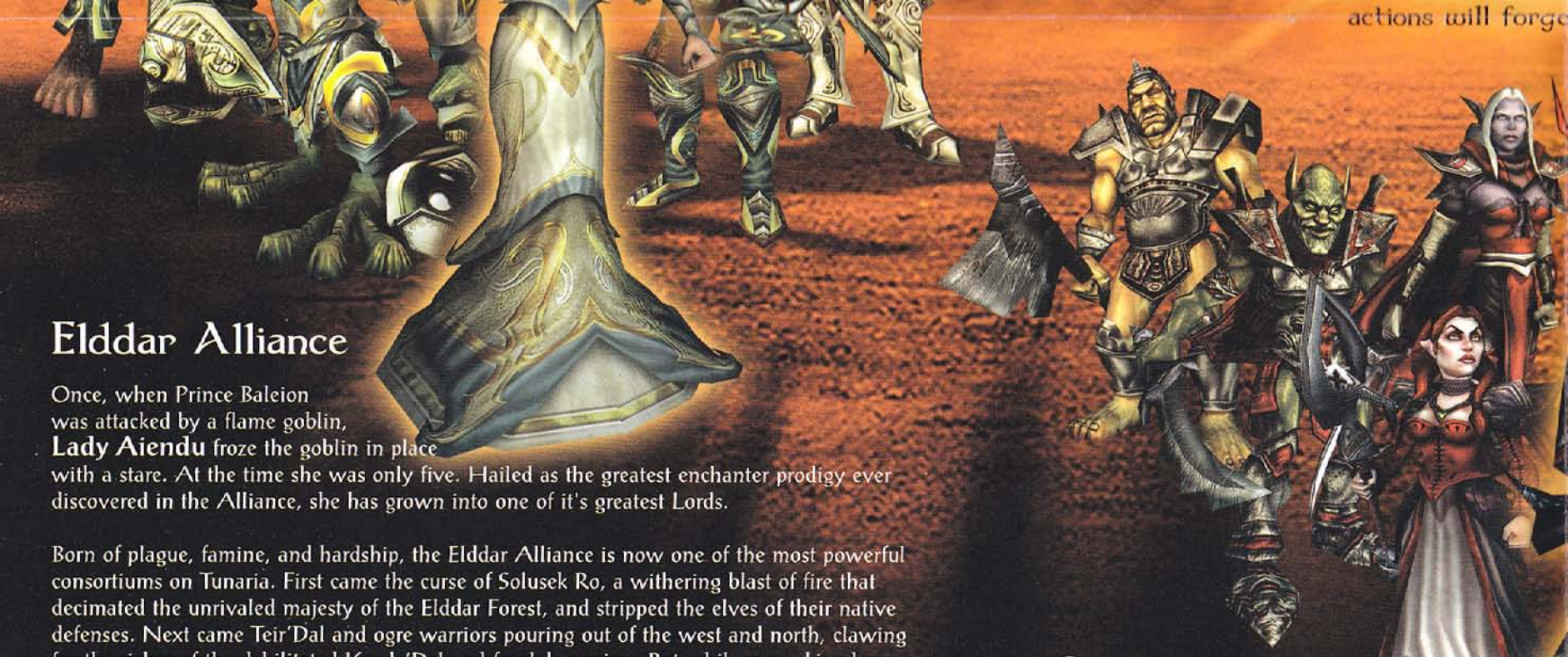


the Shadowrealm are severely hindered by internal
murder. Leadership is a measure of how feared a
trayals and factional infighting are daily threats, and
to fear from renegade Shadowrealm warlords as
ed to unite fully against their enemies, they might

## Dawn Brotherhood

Orphaned when his home in the Everfrost Peaks was destroyed by orcish raiders, **Lord Huegar** has sworn his life to the protection of those who are in need of rescue and salvation. Thrice blessed by the priests of the Temple of Marr, he has become the mightiest paladin in the whole of the Dawn Brotherhood.

As the largest consortium on Norrath, the Dawn Brotherhood holds sway over everything from the glittering shores of Erud's Crossing to the barren wastes of The Frigid Plain. Given the Brotherhood's humble origins, few could have guessed how powerful their union would one day become. Determined to secure the liberty of all their kind, the Brotherhood blazed south on a mission of liberation. In the northern plains of Karana they freed the Erudites, a magical offshoot of humanity who had been plagued for decades by savage Blackpaw gnolls. Upon the Plains they also encountered the swift, mounted warriors known as the Kerrans, and quickly won the cat-like people over to their cause. In only a matter of months, they claimed all the western lands north of the Plainscutter river, a feat unrivalled even by the former elven empire to the east. The second great consortium had staked its claim upon the lands of Tunaria.



actions will forge

## Elddar Alliance

Once, when Prince Baleion was attacked by a flame goblin, **Lady Aiendu** froze the goblin in place with a stare. At the time she was only five. Hailed as the greatest enchanter prodigy ever discovered in the Alliance, she has grown into one of it's greatest Lords.

Born of plague, famine, and hardship, the Elddar Alliance is now one of the most powerful consortiums on Tunaria. First came the curse of Solusek Ro, a withering blast of fire that decimated the unrivaled majesty of the Elddar Forest, and stripped the elves of their native defenses. Next came Teir'Dal and ogre warriors pouring out of the west and north, clawing for the riches of the debilitated Koada'Dal and froglok empires. But while many kingdoms would have folded in the face of lesser challenges, one brilliant elf transmuted the pain of his allies into an unshakable union that would change the face of Norrath.

## Shadowrealm

Until a shipwreck marooned him in the Gulf of Gunthak, **Lord Skass** lived the brutal lif of a Shissar slave. Escaping into the protection of the Shadowrealm, Skass quickly rose to power as a grand master of necromancy, a Shissar art previously unknown on Tunare.

Easily the most dangerous of the three great alliances, t discord. Advancement comes not through merit, but m leader is rather than how well he leads. Rebellions, be in any given battle, Shadowrealm forces have as much they do from the opposing alliances. If they ever learn one day rule all of Norrath unchallenged.

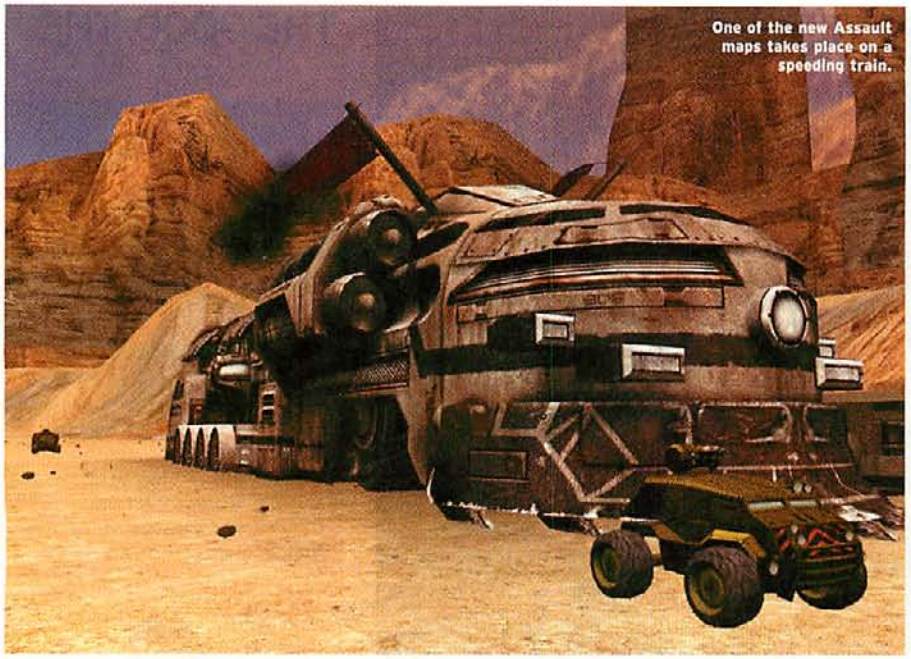
www.lordsofeverquest.com

TEEN
T
Blood & Gore
Violence
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org
Game Experience May Change During Online Play

SOE
SONY ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT

RAPID EYE ENTERTAINMENT

2003 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Lords of EverQuest is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. SOE and the SOE logo are registered trademarks of Sony Online Entertainment Inc. Rapid Eye Entertainment and its distinctive logo are trademarks of Rapid Eye Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. other trademarks or trade names are properties of their respective owners.



One of the new Assault maps takes place on a speeding train.



All aboard the deathway express.



Look at the size of them mushrooms.

HANDS ON

# Assault on Pleasanton

**Epic unveils Assault, vehicles at UT2004 event in California** By Johnny Liu

There is absolutely nothing pleasant about Pleasanton, California. On the surface, it seems like just a sleepy suburb of San Francisco, and underneath the surface, it's even less exciting. But Epic Entertainment's Cliff Bleszinski managed to change all that one fateful day in September when he blew into town to let the media play a pre-release version of *Unreal Tournament 2004* at a local cyber cafe. Point by point, Cliffy B presented his new baby-from the return of Assault to the vehicles that will completely change how *UT* is played.

One of the new Assault maps takes place atop a caravan of trains blazing full-speed across a vast desert plain. The offensive team hurries to retrieve a nuclear missile while defenders pick them off from select vantage points within the train. In another Assault map, the offense flies in by spaceship to destroy the core of a sentinel-filled space station.

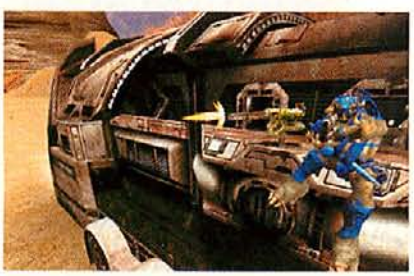
Besides the spaceship, my favorite of the new vehicles is a ground-based, single-pilot prop glider that can bound high into the air and come crashing down in a classic butt-stomp attack. Afterwards, that oh-so-familiar announcer cries out "VEHICULAR MANSLAUGHTER!"

**One of my favorite vehicles is a prop glider that can come crashing down in a classic butt-stomp attack.**

Other vehicles include a single-driver bomb lobber and a three-man truck with a giant weapon rig. The rig fires pulsating orbs that can be chained together into one massive sweeping explosion.

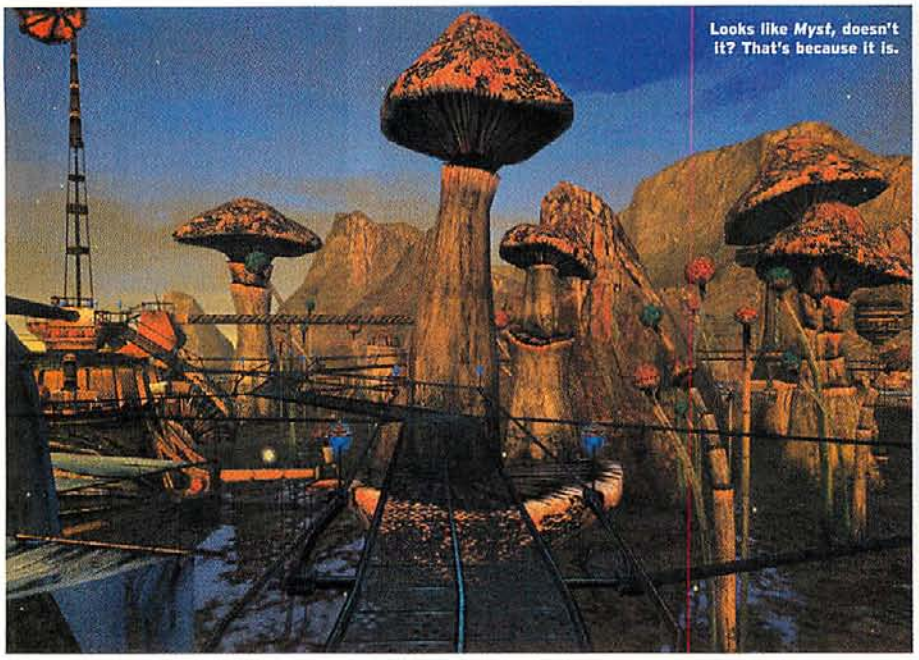
In order to balance out these vehicles, the AVRL (Anti-Vehicle Rocket Launcher) weapon is designed to be strong against the drivers, zippers, and flyers of the world, but be virtually useless in man-to-man combat.

The AVRL gun was a bright cherry red, but after the day of play, red was deemed too confusing to blue team members. A more suitable color is planned, as well as other last bits of fine-tuning for the winter release.









Looks like *Myst*, doesn't it? That's because it is.

PREVIEW

# Uru: Ages Beyond Myst

If Cyan builds it, will gamers come? By Robert Coffey

Finally, a chance to twiddle gears, align contraptions, and restore power to inert machinery online with other people!

Okay, that's maybe the nasty, cynical way to look at *Uru: Ages Beyond Myst*, the fourth installment of the record-breaking adventure game beloved by all mankind save hardcore gamers. The kinder, gentler view would be that *Uru* is the biggest *Myst* game yet, an enormous single-player game with the added bonus of new monthly content in its online incarnation. Yeah, we admit that paying for brand-new gear and solar-powered engine puzzles through a monthly subscription doesn't exactly blow our skirts up either, but for the *Myst* faithful it probably seems like exquisitely weathered manna from heaven.

One thing we all can agree upon is that, graphically, *Uru* continues to raise the very high bar set by the franchise. Only this time it's a beautiful 3D world where you can roam freely, climbing groaning catwalks to take in the gorgeous, sweeping vistas of this alien world. Then you start pulling levers, collecting Bahro stones, and tagging "journey cloths." Yeah, it's the usual *Myst*-y plot stuff that makes sense (sort of) while you're playing but is immediately lost in translation the second you walk away.

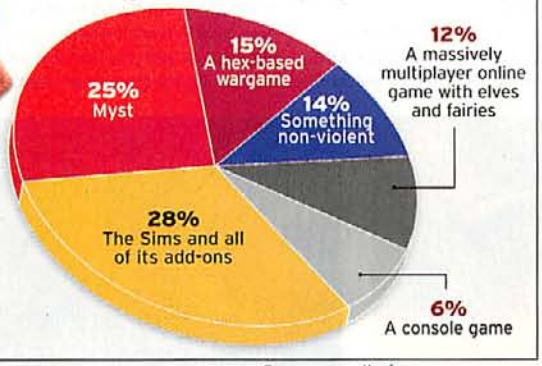
What's not the usual stuff this time around is the online component. Incredible as it sounds, *Uru* will have a big slab of online play launching about a month after the game ships this November. You'll be able to play through the single-player game with friends as well as explore a steady stream of new content. Additionally, online portions of the game will also feature puzzles that will require multiple players to solve. It's a pretty civilized online world with no death and, therefore, no player-versus player. And to keep people from camping that, um, big gear puzzle, pocket universes will be created to allow you and your friends to rebuild and explore the world in peace and without interference.

We confess, this isn't high on our Must Play list, but for gamers that like this sort of thing, it might pump their waterwheel. It should be big.

## QUICK POLL

**I'd die before you made me play...**






Survey results from gamers.com.

## THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE UGLY



### THE GOOD
### THE SIMPSONS: HIT & RUN

You might think pickings are slim if we're singling out as "The Good" the PC port of a console game based on a TV show. But this is the greatest TV show of all time, and *The Simpsons: Hit & Run*, a *GTA*-inspired goof of a game, is the first videogame to finally do the franchise right.




### THE BAD
### HALF-LIFE 2 DELAYED

Not a surprise, given Valve's abysmal track record for releasing new games. What they had insisted would be a September 30 release will now be out, at best, "for the holidays." Uh-huh. Sure. Our money says it doesn't make it in 2003 at all. Of course, they could've come clean about this months ago, rather than lead everyone on. But hey—they're Valve. They make their own rules.



### THE UGLY
### NO HALO CO-OP

Man, what was Microsoft thinking? First they make us wait two years for *Halo*. Then, when they finally get around to releasing it on the PC, they abandon one of the best things about the game: the co-op mode. We don't even want to hear their explanation; there's no excuse. They had two years to get this right, and they totally blew it. Way to go, Microsoft.

## COMING NEXT MONTH—THE BEST ISSUE EVER!

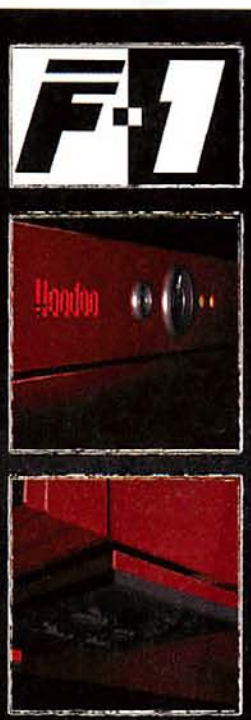
**COMPUTER GAMING WORLD**

**JANUARY CGW ON SALE DECEMBER 2**

**Don't miss it!**

- Huge hands-on preview of *Doom III*—the full scoop!
- Gigantic gift guide loaded with 50 hot games and goodies
- Twelve top gaming systems reviewed—more than $100,000 worth of outrageous PCs. It's the biggest Ultimate Game Machine roundup in *CGW*'s history.
- PLUS, newsstand buyers and CD subscribers will get a special collector's edition DVD packed with free FULL games like *Deus Ex*, *Prince of Persia*, *Warlords: Battlecry*, and *Thief II*, plus loads of killer demos for all those holiday games you've been waiting for.

**You must've been good boys and girls this year, because jolly old saint Ziff is bringing you a whopper of a holiday issue. Check it out!**




*definitive*
*/de*fin"i*tive/*

POSITIVE;
FINAL;
CONCLUSIVE;
*unconditional*

THE
*definitive*
PC EXPERIENCE
*only* @ VOODOO

DESIGN ONLINE
VOODOOPC.COM
888.708.6636
TOLL-FREE
SALES & SERVICE

Voodoo

AMD 64 Athlon

VOODOO F-1 WAS BORN OF A NEED FOR SPEED, AN UNCOMMON PASSION FOR QUALITY AND INDIVIDUAL STYLE. CINEMATICS ARE DELIVERED BY THE NVIDIA GEFORCE FX 5900 ULTRA: THE *only* TRUE 128-BIT GPU AND HER RAW POWER IS DRIVEN BY THE *only* WINDOWS-COMPATIBLE, 64-BIT PC PROCESSOR: THE AMD ATHLON 64. PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE EVOLUTION OF POWER AND THE REVOLUTION OF THE MIND.

nVIDIA GeForce FX

"A BREATHTAKING, ORIGINAL BALLET OF DEATH."
COMPUTER GAMING WORLD



# MAX PAYNE™ 2

## THE FALL OF MAX PAYNE

## A FILM NOIR LOVE STORY







**WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/MAXPAYNE2**
**WWW.MAXPAYNE2.COM**

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

MATURE 17+
M
Intense Violence
Strong Language
Blood
Mature Sexual Themes
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

© 2003 Rockstar Games, Inc. The R* logo is a registered trademark of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. Max Payne and the Max Payne logo are trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. Remedy and the Remedy logo are trademarks of Remedy Entertainment, Ltd. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All rights reserved.

REMEDY™

R*





Combat legions of foes as you fight to liberate France.



Escorting characters safely to their destination is a frequent mission objective.

HANDS-ON

# Joan of Arc

Are you man enough to fight like a woman? By Ryan Scott

Back in her day (and before she was even old enough to drink), Joan of Arc rose from obscurity to become a revered military leader. Her religious zeal drove her on a quest to liberate her homeland of France from the evil grasp of a bunch of domineering English, for which she was honored by being barbecued alive. Some reward.

Hopefully you'll have an easier time in *Wars and Warriors: Joan of Arc*, a hybrid action-strategy game from Trevor Chan and Enlight Software (creators of *Seven Kingdoms* and *Capitalism*). The game lets you relive the exploits of the general in a first- and third-person perspective, and it has RPG features like experience points that enhance Joan's abilities.

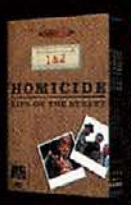
As Joan, you'll fight your way through a series of nine large levels studded with castles and detailed cities. Escorting other characters safely through hostile territory, reaching specific locations intact, and annihilating enemy resistance are among your tasks, for which you will be awarded experience points and items.

You'll have plenty of medieval toys and troops to play with, such as battering rams and archers. The game's first-person fighting engine features a somewhat simplistic combo system; combat isn't terribly challenging at this point, though there are a couple of interesting options, such as the ability to wield a bow from a first-person perspective. You can also ride horses, engage in mounted combat, and lay siege to cities using catapults, cannon, and trebuchets.

Watch for Joan to make her bid for glory this holiday season.

## GET A LIFE

**And maybe you can get out of mowing the lawn**




### Homicide DVDs

From the creator of *Oz* and the director of *The Natural* came *Homicide*, a brilliant crime drama that's still ahead of its time. The newly released DVDs finally give you a chance to check out the black humor, ground-breaking camera work, and amazing acting of this underrated show.




### Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them

Once again Al Franken brilliantly skewers the lies and distortions of the conservative right and reveals some of the country's leaders and their media stooges for what they are: lying, venal, and self-serving. An extremely important and enlightening book that's also fun to read—if you're big tree-huggers like us.



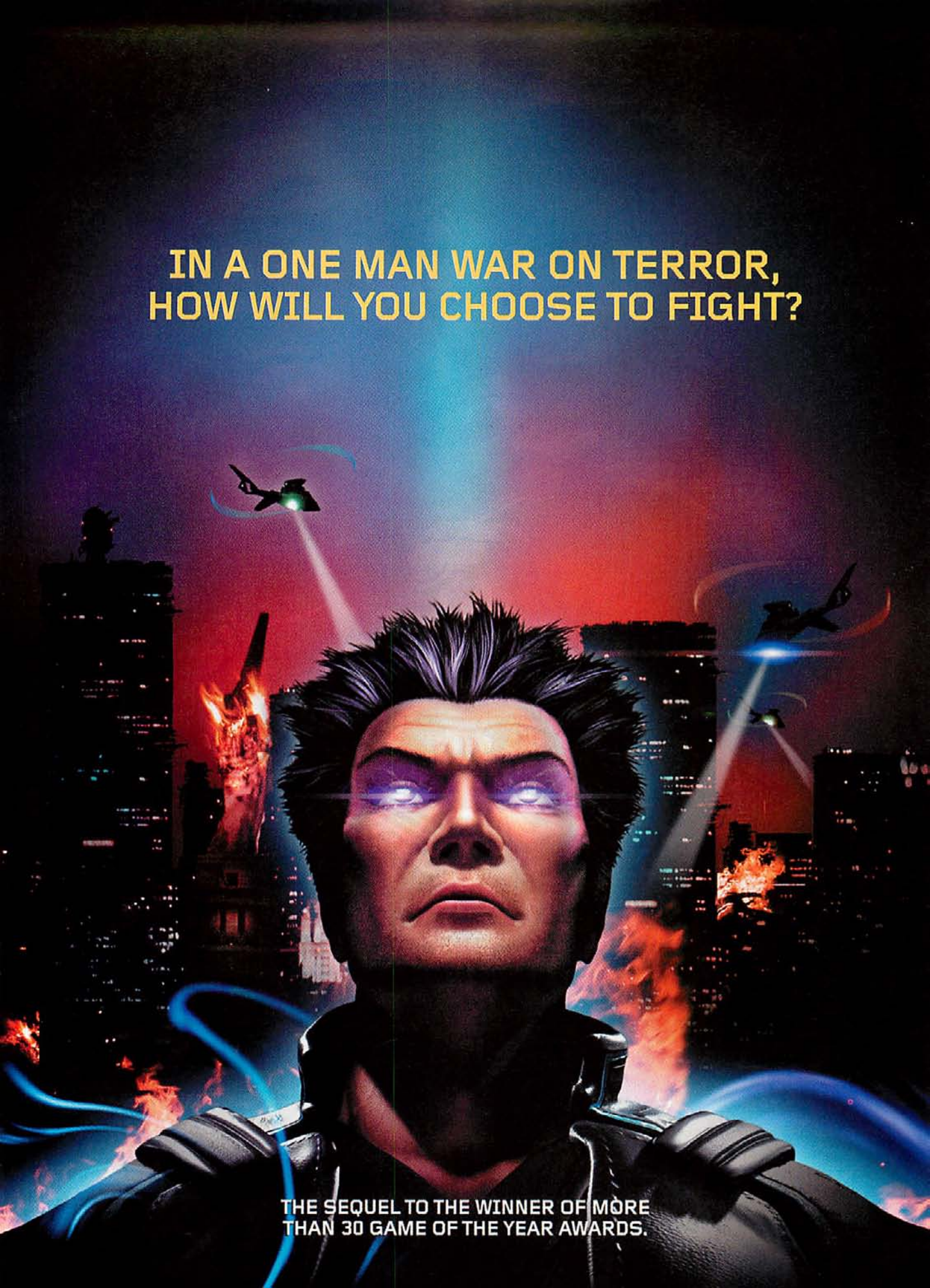
### Happiness of the Katakuris

Instead of being dragged to another beyond boring musical, check out this incomparable musical-horror-comedy about zombies, a cursed boarding house, and breakouts of song and dance. The only downside: You'll never get to choose the movie again.



### Dungeons and Dreamers

An excellent history of computer games and the cultural impact they've had, from the early days to today's massively multiplayer affairs. While not exhaustive, the book offers illuminating stories of Richard "Lord British" Garriott, Id Software, Will Wright, *Counter-Strike*, LAN parties, and more. Recommended reading for any game geek.


IN A ONE MAN WAR ON TERROR,
HOW WILL YOU CHOOSE TO FIGHT?
THE SEQUEL TO THE WINNER OF MORE
THAN 30 GAME OF THE YEAR AWARDS.




Deus Ex: Invisible War (tm) Ion Storm LLP 2003. Developed by Ion Storm LLP Published by Eidos Inc. Deus Ex: Invisible War, Ion Storm and the Ion Storm logo are trademarks of Ion Storm. Eidos and the Eidos logo are trademarks of the Eidos Group of companies. ©2003 Eidos Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All rights reserved.

# UNSEEN. UNAUTHORIZED. UNSTOPPABLE.

## WAGE WAR AS YOU CHOOSE




HACKING
SPEED
STUNPROD
MAKO PISTOL
FLAMETHROWER
CLOAK
BRIBE

# DEUS EX
# INVISIBLE WAR

## THE FUTURE WAR ON TERROR

WWW.DXINVISIBLEWAR.COM

The way it's meant to be played
NVIDIA.

NVIDIA GeForce FX
The GPU of Deus Ex: Invisible War

## COMING IN DECEMBER

RATING PENDING
RP
Visit www.esrb.org for more ratings information.
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

HANDS-ON

# Hordes of the Underdark

**Neverwinter Nights expansion shows off better graphics and new features** By Johnny Liu



Trapped in a dungeon on a quest for love, I had a chance to traipse through the new environments in *Hordes of the Underdark*, the next expansion for *Neverwinter Nights*. Bioware's Tom Ohle took me on a small adventure to show off some of the new features coming in the holiday season expansion. Among the upgrades are six new prestige classes, including the winged Dragon disciple. (The wings are just for show—no flying.) Visual elements such as cloaks, will be native to the expansion, so no more hak-packs for custom visual tweaks. There's also a mess of new enemies, including several hefty golems.

**There's also a mess of new enemies in this expansion, including several hefty golems.**



The graphics look prettier due to increased poly counts, and you can get a better look at the action with an extended zoom range.

The campaign quest to save Waterdeep will utilize a newly doubled level cap, upping the previous 20 to 40. While this is great for those who are already indoctrinated in *Neverwinter Nights*, jumping directly into *Hordes* would be for the uninitiated like taking the SATs right after grade school.

Even though I was never able to find that elusive love, *Neverwinter* fans will feel the passion this winter when *Hordes of the Underdark* is released.



## EXTENDED PLAY: HOMEBREW

By T. Byrl Baker

### I'll get you, Red Baron!

**Full Canvas Jacket**
**$28**
www.plgrafix.com

We've been waiting a long time for a WWI flight sim that can surpass the brilliance of *Red Baron 3D*, so it's more than a little ironic that when that day finally arrived, it came in the form of a *RB3D* mod.

Actually, calling this project a mod is an understatement. The graphics look fantastic compared to the aging textures and models that shipped with *RB3D*. Thanks to the Glidos wrapper, you can play in full-on Glide mode instead of the inferior Direct3D version, even if you don't have an old Voodoo card installed in your machine. Best of all, you'll finally be able to run it at 1280x1024 resolution, something that wasn't even possible with two Voodoo cards running in SLI mode in RB3D.

The flight and damage models are completely overhauled, and if you don't aim for the enemy's engine (or his head) expect to go home empty-handed. Everything is controlled via a slick Windows-based configuration interface that provides unfettered access to all of the game's advanced options.

This thing is so big that you can only get it on CD, and if all the free mods you've downloaded have made you hesitant to spend $28 on a fan-made project, don't worry. The first time you limp home from a campaign mission—fighting to keep your cabbage crate from smashing into the photorealistic scenery—you'll know that it was money well spent.






Long ago, the Lonely Mountain trembled as the Dragon Smaug destroyed the Dwarf-kingdom in fire and rage. Now, the Dwarves set out upon an epic quest to reclaim their stolen treasures. And I, Gandalf the wizard, send with them the most unlikely of heroes: you, Bilbo Baggins of the Shire.

SIERRA · VIVENDI UNIVERSAL games · INEVITABLE · PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE · NINTENDO GAMECUBE · XBOX · PlayStation 2 · GAME BOY ADVANCE

OFFICIAL GAME
BASED ON THE LITERARY WORKS OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN™

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Violence
Comic Mischief

"THE HOBBIT" INTERACTIVE GAME ©2003 VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. THE TOLKIEN ENTERPRISES LOGO, "THE HOBBIT," "THE LORD OF THE RINGS" AND THE CHARACTERS, EVENTS, ITEMS AND PLACES THEREIN, ARE TRADEMARKS OR REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF THE SAUL ZAENTZ COMPANY, DBA TOLKIEN ENTERPRISES, AND ARE USED UNDER LICENSE BY VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES, INC. VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES AND THE VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES LOGO ARE TRADEMARKS OF VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES, INC. "SIERRA" AND THE SIERRA LOGO ARE TRADEMARKS OR REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF SIERRA ENTERTAINMENT, INC., IN THE U.S. AND/OR OTHER COUNTRIES. DEVELOPED BY INEVITABLE ENTERTAINMENT, INC. TM, ®, GAME BOY ADVANCE AND THE NINTENDO GAMECUBE ARE TRADEMARKS OF NINTENDO. LICENSED FOR PLAY ON THE PLAYSTATION 2 COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEMS WITH THE NTSC U/C DESIGNATION ONLY. U.S. AND FOREIGN PATENTS PENDING. "PLAYSTATION" AND THE "PS" FAMILY LOGO ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT INC. MICROSOFT, XBOX AND THE XBOX LOGOS ARE EITHER REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OR TRADEMARKS OF MICROSOFT CORPORATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND/OR OTHER COUNTRIES AND ARE USED UNDER LICENSE FROM MICROSOFT. DOLBY, PRO LOGIC, AND THE DOUBLE-D SYMBOL ARE TRADEMARKS OF DOLBY LABORATORIES. USES BINK VIDEO. COPYRIGHT ©1997-2003 BY RAD GAME TOOLS, INC. MPEG LAYER-3 PLAYBACK SUPPLIED WITH THE MILES SOUND SYSTEM FROM RAD GAME TOOLS, INC. MPEG LAYER-3 AUDIO COMPRESSION TECHNOLOGY LICENSED BY FRAUNHOFER IIS AND THOMSON MULTIMEDIA. ALL OTHER TRADEMARKS ARE PROPERTY OF THEIR RESPECTIVE OWNERS.




"WAR OF THE RING" INTERACTIVE GAME © 2003 VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. THE TOLKIEN ENTERPRISES LOGO, TOGETHER WITH "THE LORD OF THE RINGS," "THE WAR OF THE RING," AND THE CHARACTERS, EVENTS, ITEMS, AND PLACES THEREIN ARE TRADEMARKS OR REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF THE SAUL ZAENTZ COMPANY DBA TOLKIEN ENTERPRISES UNDER LICENSE TO VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES, INC. VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES AND THE VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES LOGO ARE TRADEMARKS OF VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES, INC. "SIERRA" AND THE SIERRA LOGO ARE TRADEMARKS OR REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF SIERRA ENTERTAINMENT, INC., IN THE U.S. AND/OR OTHER COUNTRIES. GAMESPY AND THE "POWERED BY GAMESPY" DESIGN ARE TRADEMARKS OF GAMESPY INDUSTRIES, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. ALL OTHER LOGOS ARE PROPERTY OF THEIR RESPECTIVE OWNERS.

"The great storm is coming, but the tide has turned."

– Gandalf



Strengthen armies with Gandalf or the Balrog.



Wage war in open lands and 3-D structures.



Exploit terrain to gain tactical advantages.







**Welcome to Middle-earth.**
**The journey begins this fall.**

OFFICIAL GAME

BASED ON THE LITERARY WORKS OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN

www.lordoftherings.com

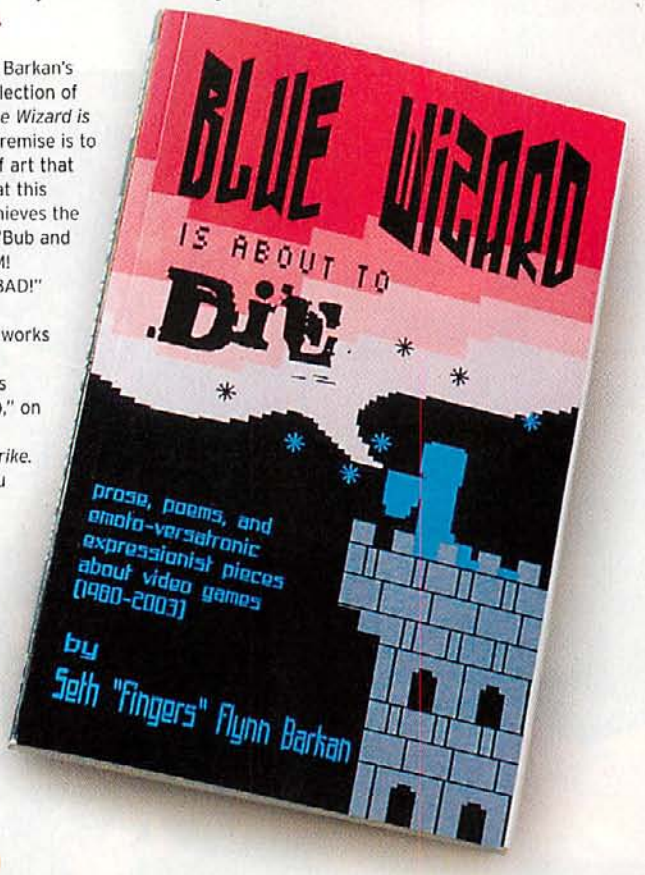
BOOKS

# Worse Verse

The first book of poetry about videogames could also be its last **By Ken Brown**

In the intro to Seth Barkan's appallingly bad collection of poems entitled *Blue Wizard is About to Die*, Barkan says his premise is to portray games as "the works of art that they truly are." It's a shame that this cringe-worthy compendium achieves the exact opposite, with lines like, "Bub and Bob/get da banana!/ICE CREAM! Explode/Mr. Enemy; BAD BAD BAD!" Bad, indeed.

The book contains nearly 50 works of "prose, poems, and emoto-versatronic expressionist pieces about videogames (1980-2003)," on numerous games from '80s arcades to *Mario* to *Counter-Strike*. Not all of them are terrible. You could give Barkan (and his publisher) credit for actually producing a book of poetry about videogames, but it will probably only appeal to Gen-X types with a predilection for strange bad things. Read *Blue Wizard* in the same sense you would play *Frogger* or watch *The A-Team*—as an amusing oddity and for a taste of nostalgia, but not necessarily because it is art.




## DUMPSTER DIVER

**Digging up gold in the bargain bins** By Ryan Scott

Waiting for another awesome *Fallout*-esque RPG to play? Yeah, so are we. Unfortunately, the recently-released *Lionheart: Legacy of the Crusader* (which uses the *Fallout* system) totally fails to deliver. There is, however, hope: For the same price as a new copy of *Lionheart*, you can pick up a *Fallout 1/Fallout 2* bundle, and even have enough left over to buy the entire *Baldur's Gate II* collection and a pizza! If that doesn't slake your RPG hunger, we don't know what will.




**Fallout 1/ Fallout 2 Bundle** $20

**Baldur's Gate II: The Collection** $20

**Lionheart: Legacy of the Crusader** $50

## 5, 10, 15 YEARS AGO IN *CGW*



**Five Years Ago, December, 1998**

We're betting we'll never see an ad like the one Advent speakers ran in this issue, inexplicably linking a real live woman in tattered clothing and bound in chains with *Unreal*. But some things never change—our Letters section featured a pissy missive from a humorless Canadian, thus laying the groundwork for our eventual Canadian Corner's year-long run of glory.




**Ten Years Ago, December, 1993**

It was quite possibly the most disparaged PC game ever—but we liked it. Our review of *Myst* called it "an instant CD classic." We were as wowed by the graphics as all the folks that made it the biggest selling computer game (until *The Sims*). CD games were so new that we called them out as CD-ROM Reviews, separate from other games. Compared to the blocky graphics of even great games like *Privateer* (reviewed in the same issue), we could forgive the mazes and gear puzzles for the tantalizing glimpse into PC gaming's future.




**Fifteen Years Ago, December, 1988**

"*Infocom*'s new graphics will blow you out of the water," boasted the ad. Not really, we replied. Seriously, it was graphics like this that led to that glowing *Myst* review five years later. Then again, just having graphics was kind of a big deal for a former text adventure company. This issue featured about a zillion Civil War games and even more fantasy RPGs, leaving us wondering why some genius didn't make an Appomattox game with dragons and get rich?

# Power tools



## MAGIC The Gathering® ONLINE

Arm yourself with new Artifact Equipment cards in the **Magic: The Gathering®** *Mirrodin™* set. It all goes down in a harsh metal world, teeming with deadly new creatures and spells. To survive, you'll need to handle your weapons with skill and fury.

Demo the game at
magicthegathering.com




All trademarks, including the ♠♦♥♣ symbols, are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2003 Wizards.

## THIS MONTH'S TOP 5

# PRE-ORDERS



**Half-Life 2** *(Electronic Arts)* Research scientist Gordon Freeman finds himself on an alien-infested Earth being picked to the bone, its resources depleted, its populace dwindling. He is thrust into the unenviable role of rescuing the world from the wrong he unleashed back at Black Mesa.




**Counter-Strike: Condition Zero** *(Sierra)* This new standalone game extends the award-winning Counter-Strike multiplayer game with new maps, weapons, and more while simultaneously introducing new technologies, an extensive single-player campaign, and cooperative play.




**Neverwinter Nights: Hordes of the Underdark Expansion Pack** *(Atari)* This expansion will make numerous additions to the original game, including the new epic characters rules that will let players take their characters from the already high character level of 20 all the way up to 40.




**Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic** *(LucasArts)* It is the Golden Age of the Republic. The Galaxy is reeling from a recent conflict with the Dark Lords, and the ongoing battle between the Jedi and the Sith rages on. Your actions will decide the outcome of this war—and your destiny as a Jedi.




**Horizons: Empire of Istaria** *(Atari)* Imagine beautiful, massive, zone-free environments, epic level combat encounters on a scale never seen before, extensive support for player-run communities and guilds within the game world and, for the first time in any MMORPG, playable dragons!

## THIS MONTH'S TOP 5

# RELEASES




**The Sims: Makin' Magic Expansion Pack** *(Electronic Arts)* Venture to an all-new magical, carnival-themed destination where Sims are granted magical powers with the ability to cast spells to improve love lives, wreak havoc on visiting neighbors, or put an end to tedious chores.




**Civilization 3: Conquests Expansion Pack** *(Atari)* Expansion pack for wildly popular strategy game and includes seven new civilizations, new units, disasters, techs and wonders. Plenty of new abilities and game options to explore for one or more players using LAN or Internet connection.




**NBA Live 2004** *(EA Sports)* Build a powerhouse dynasty. Recruit the top free agents and draft future stars in a revamped dynasty mode. Features a new all-star announcer team, enhanced freestyle control, new animations, new AI logic, and enhanced focus on rebounding battles.




**Age of Mythology: The Titans Expansion Pack** *(Microsoft)* Titans add another important chapter as the ancient world comes to life in great detail with exciting gameplay elements and characters. Harness the awesome powers of the Titan gods as the battle for heaven and earth continues.




**Halo: Combat Evolved** *(Microsoft)* The PC adaptation of the hit console sci-fi shooter is based on the original concept. The action is set on a mysterious alien ring- world, and your objective is to uncover its horrible secret, and destroy mankind's nemesis—the Covenant.


**All available now at the Computer & Video Games store at**

**amazon.com.**

Get thousands of game titles at amazon.com/videogames

SURVEY SAYS...

# CGW Top 20

Looking for a good time, sailor?

| RANK | GAME | RATING |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Grand Theft Auto: Vice City** (Rockstar) | ★★★★★ |
| 2 | **WarCraft III: The Frozen Throne** (Blizzard) | ★★★★½ |
| 3 | **Madden NFL 2004** (EA Sports) | ★★★★½ |
| 4 | **Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4** (Activision) | ★★★★½ |
| 5 | **Battlefield 1942: Secret Weapons of WWII** (Electronic Arts) | ★★★★½ |
| 6 | **Midnight Club II** (Rockstar) | ★★★½ |
| 7 | **Enter the Matrix** (Atari) | ★★½ |
| 8 | **Rise of Nations** (Microsoft) | ★★★★½ |
| 9 | **Tron 2.0** (Disney) | ★★★★½ |
| 10 | **The Elder Scrolls III: Bloodmoon** (Bethesda) | ★★★★½ |



*Vice City:* Brutality can be a beautiful thing.



*Frozen Throne* continues to cast its spell on *WarCraft III* fans.



*Madden 2004* PC is finally better than the console versions.

| RANK | GAME | RATING |
|---|---|---|
| 11 | **PlanetSide** (Sony Online Entertainment) | ★★★★½ |
| 12 | **Star Wars Galaxies** (LucasArts) | ★★½ |
| 13 | **Delta Force 3: Black Hawk Down** (NovaLogic) | ★★★★½ |
| 14 | **Day of Defeat** (Activision) | ★★★★½ |
| 15 | **Age of Wonders: Shadow Magic** (Gathering) | ★★★★½ |
| 16 | **The Hulk** (Atari) | ★★★★½ |
| 17 | **Galactic Civilizations** (Strategy First) | ★★★★½ |
| 18 | **Homeworld 2** (Vivendi) | ★★½ |
| 19 | **Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness** (Eidos) | ★½ |
| 20 | **Medieval: Total War-Viking Invasion** (Activision) | ★★★★½ |

The Top 20 is obtained from a survey of readers' favorite games from the last six months. To vote, visit our website at www.computergaming.com.


# GREAT DEALS ON PC GAMES

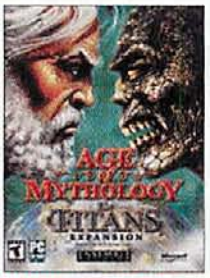



**Halo: Combat Evolved** *(Microsoft)*

Your objective is to uncover Halo's horrible secret, and destroy mankind's nemesis–the Covenant.

*Features:*
- Battle through amazing indoor and outdoor environments, in vehicles and on foot
- largest arsenal of futuristic weapons, vehicles, and com bat roles of any shooter ever.

*Regular Price:* ~~$49.99~~
*Sale Price!* $44.99




**Age of Mythology: The Titans Expansion Pack** *(Microsoft)*

Titans join the fray as the battle for heaven and earth continues...

*Features:*
- New single-player campaign, scores of new mythological units, and the ability to upgrade units to heroes
- Atlanteans can use god powers multiple times; unleash huge Titans to wreak havoc
- Exciting gameplay elements and characters.

*Regular Price:* ~~$29.99~~
*Sale Price!* $24.99




**Battlefield 1942: Deluxe Edition** *(Electronic Arts)*

Battlefield 1942 and the highly-acclaimed Road to Rome expansion pack

*Features:*
- All-out combat in all four theatres of war
- Two new maps: Coral Sea and Operation Aberdeen
- Go to war online with up to 64 players and fight with over 40 vehicles and more than 20 weapons.

*Regular Price:* ~~$49.99~~
*Sale Price!* $44.99




**Flight Simulator 2004: A Century of Flight** *(Microsoft)*

The next milestone in the award-winning Flight Simulator franchise.

*Features:*
- Experience history at the controls of historic aircraft
- Enjoy the history and excitement of a century of flight
- Dynamic weather system based on realistic atmospheric physics.

*Regular Price:* ~~$54.99~~
*Sale Price!* $49.99

**Check Out More Great Deals Online at**
**amazon.com.**

# PIPELINE

## Here come the holiday releases By Ryan Scott

**Well, it's the end of the year—time for half of those games we've been looking forward to all year to ship (the ones that haven't slipped to 2004). If they all ship by Christmas, even the Grinch-iest gamers should be happy.**



**1 DEUS EX: INVISIBLE WAR** The sequel to the ground-breaking game that garnered numerous awards three years ago is finally expected to ship December 2. *Invisible War* is shaping up to be graphical tour de force, with incredible physics and greater freedom to do what you want. Biomods will let players to see through walls, run faster than cars, leap 40 feet in the air, repair body damage, and become radar invisible to your foes. If you never played the original, we're giving it away free on our January cover disc.



**2 BEYOND GOOD & EVIL** Our man Johnny Liu got a chance to check this action-adventure game out recently, and it's looking good. Developed by the folks behind the *Rayman* franchise, the story follows a girl named Jade and her bizarre friends as they investigate dastardly government conspiracies on their home planet of Hyllis. With a distinctly anime-meets-France aesthetic and plenty of free-roaming exploration, this quirky little title is shaping up to be another notch in Ubisoft's collective belt.



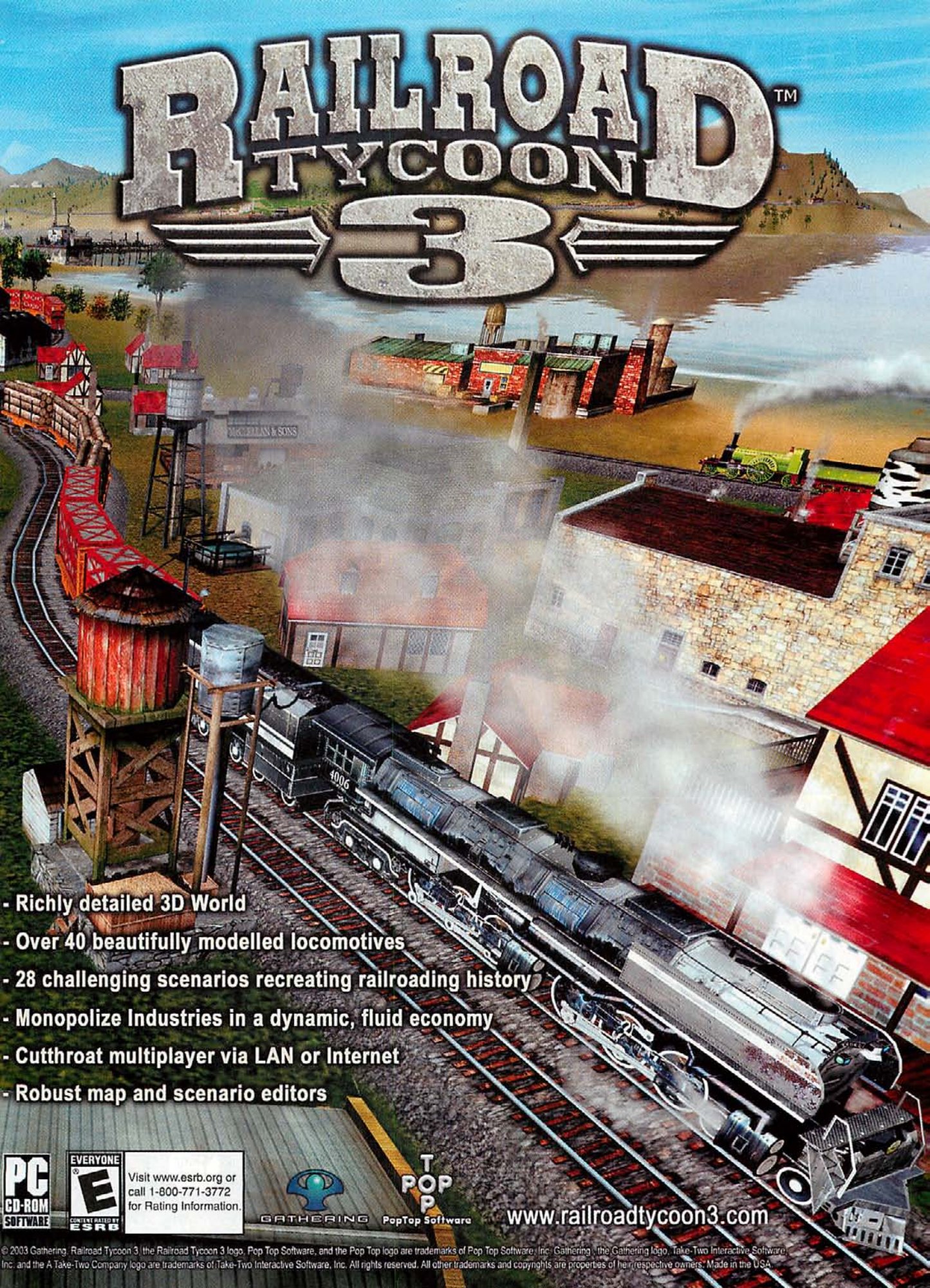
**3 ULTIMA X: ODYSSEY** Jaded by *Ultima Online*? Traumatized by the ungodly disaster that was *Ultima IX: Ascension*? EA's taking another stab at it in 2004 with *UXO*, yet another entry into the ever-ballooning MMO market. It looks stellar, it plays quite smoothly, and it uses the latest *Unreal* engine (which seems to be the popular thing to do these days). Now the only question is, how well is it going to uphold the *Ultima* legacy? Hey, as long as Ryan can visit his beloved freehold of Skara Brae, he'll be happy.

| GAME | PUBLISHER | EXPECTED |
|---|---|---|
| Alias | Acclaim | Q4 2003 |
| Armed & Dangerous | LucasArts | Q4 2003 |
| Armored Assault | iEntertainment Network | Q4 2003 |
| Battlefield Command | Codemasters | Q2 2004 |
| Battlefield Vietnam | EA Games | Q1 2004 |
| Beyond Good & Evil | Ubisoft | Q4 2003 |
| Black & White II | Electronic Arts | Q1 2004 |
| Broken Sword: The Sleeping Dragon | The Adventure Company | Q4 2003 |
| Call of Cthulhu: Dark Corners of the Earth | Bethesda Softworks | Q1 2004 |
| Call of Duty | Activision | Q4 2003 |
| City of Heroes | NCsoft | Q1 2004 |
| Contract J.A.C.K. | VU Games | Q4 2003 |
| Damn Dirty Apes | Capcom | Q4 2003 |
| Dead to Rights | Hip Interactive | Q4 2003 |
| Delta Force: Black Hawk Down–Team Sabre | NovaLogic | Q1 2004 |
| Deus Ex: Invisible War | Eidos Interactive | Q4 2003 |
| Doom III | Activision | Q1 2004 |
| Driver 3 | Atari | Q1 2004 |
| Dungeon Siege: Legends of Aranna | Microsoft | Q4 2003 |
| Dungeon Siege II | Microsoft | 2004 |
| EverQuest II | Sony Online | Q4 2003 |
| Evil Genius | VU Games | Q3 2004 |
| Far Cry | Ubisoft | Q4 2003 |
| Final Fantasy XI | Square Enix | Q4 2003 |
| Gladiator: Sword of Vengeance | Acclaim | Q4 2003 |
| Ground Control 2: Operation Exodus | NDA Productions | Q4 2003 |
| Guild Wars | NCsoft | 2004 |
| Half-Life 2 | VU Games | Q4 2003 |
| The Hobbit | Sierra | Q4 2003 |

| GAME | PUBLISHER | EXPECTED |
|---|---|---|
| Horizons: Empire of Istaria | Atari | Q4 2003 |
| Joan of Arc | Enlight | Q4 2003 |
| Joint Operations | NovaLogic | Q1 2004 |
| Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer | Aspyr | 2003 |
| Larry Bond's Harpoon 4 | Ubisoft | Q4 2003 |
| Lineage II: The Chaotic Chronicle | NCsoft | Q4 2003 |
| Lords of EverQuest | SOE | Q4 2003 |
| Lords of the Realm III | Sierra | Q4 2003 |
| The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King | Electronic Arts | Q4 2003 |
| The Lord of the Rings: War of the Ring | Black Label | Q4 2003 |
| Magic: The Gathering – Battlegrounds | Atari | Q4 2003 |
| Magic: The Gathering Online 2.0 | Wizards of the Coast | Q4 2003 |
| The Matrix Online | Ubisoft | 2004 |
| Medal of Honor: Pacific Assault | Electronic Arts | Q1 2004 |
| Men of Valor: Vietnam | Sierra | Q1 2004 |
| Middle-Earth Online | VU Games | 2004 |
| The Movies | Activision | Q2 2004 |
| Mythica | Microsoft | Q4 2004 |
| Need for Speed Underground | Electronic Arts | Q4 2003 |
| Neverwinter Nights: Hordes of the Underdark | Atari | Q4 2003 |
| Operation Flashpoint 2 | Codemasters | Q4 2004 |
| PlanetSide: Core Combat | SOE | Q4 2003 |
| Postal 2 Multiplayer | Whiptail Interactive | Q4 2003 |
| Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time | Ubisoft | Q4 2003 |
| Rome: Total War | Activision | Q1 2004 |

| GAME | PUBLISHER | EXPECTED |
|---|---|---|
| Sam & Max: Freelance Police | LucasArts | Q1 2004 |
| Secret Weapons Over Normandy | LucasArts | Q4 2003 |
| Shade: Wrath of Angels | Cenega | 2004 |
| The Simpsons: Hit & Run | VU Games | Q4 2003 |
| The Sims: Makin' Magic | Electronic Arts | Q4 2003 |
| The Sims 2 | Electronic Arts | Q1 2004 |
| Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow | Ubisoft | Q1 2004 |
| Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic | LucasArts | Q4 2003 |
| Stalker: Oblivion Lost | THQ | 2004 |
| SWAT: Urban Justice | Sierra | TBA |
| Team Fortress 2: Brotherhood of Arms | Sierra | Q4 2004 |
| Terminator 3: War of the Machines | Atari | Q4 2003 |
| Thief III | Eidos Interactive | Q2 2004 |
| Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004 | EA Sports | Q4 2003 |
| Tribes: Vengeance | Sierra | Q4 2004 |
| Trinity: The Shatter Effect | Activision | Q2 2004 |
| Ultima X: Odyssey | Electronic Arts | Q1 2004 |
| Unreal Tournament 2004 | Atari | Q4 2003 |
| Uru: Ages Beyond Myst | Ubisoft | Q4 2003 |
| Vampire: The Masquerade – Bloodlines | Activision | Q1 2004 |
| Vegas: Make it Big | Empire Interactive | Q4 2003 |
| World of WarCraft | Blizzard | Q2 2004 |

NEW UPDATE



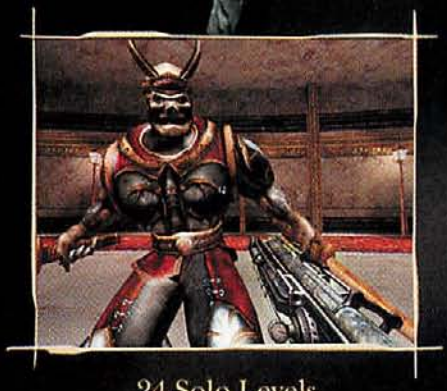

© 2003 Gathering. Railroad Tycoon 3, the Railroad Tycoon 3 logo, Pop Top Software, and the Pop Top logo are trademarks of Pop Top Software, Inc. Gathering, the Gathering logo, Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. and the A Take-Two Company logo are trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. All rights reserved. All other trademarks and copyrights are properties of their respective owners. Made in the USA.

# HEAVEN'S GOT A HITMAN

## I DIED DANIEL GARNER

I WAS SENTENCED TO SERVE IN PAIN SOMEWHERE BETWEEN HEAVEN AND HELL. I LOST MY FAITH, BUT GAINED A NEW NAME. NOW I AM THE ANGELS' ONLY PRAYER.

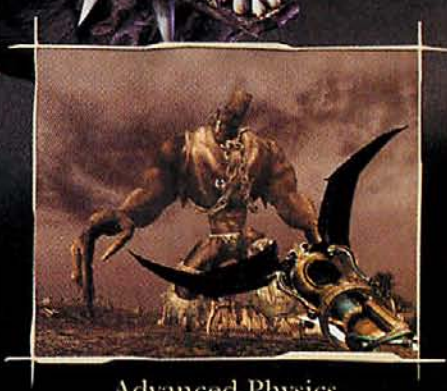




24 Solo Levels



Hardcore Multi-Player



Advanced Physics

**"INTRIGUED? YES, WE ARE..." - PC GAMER**

MATURE 17+ M Blood and Gore Violence ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

XBOX

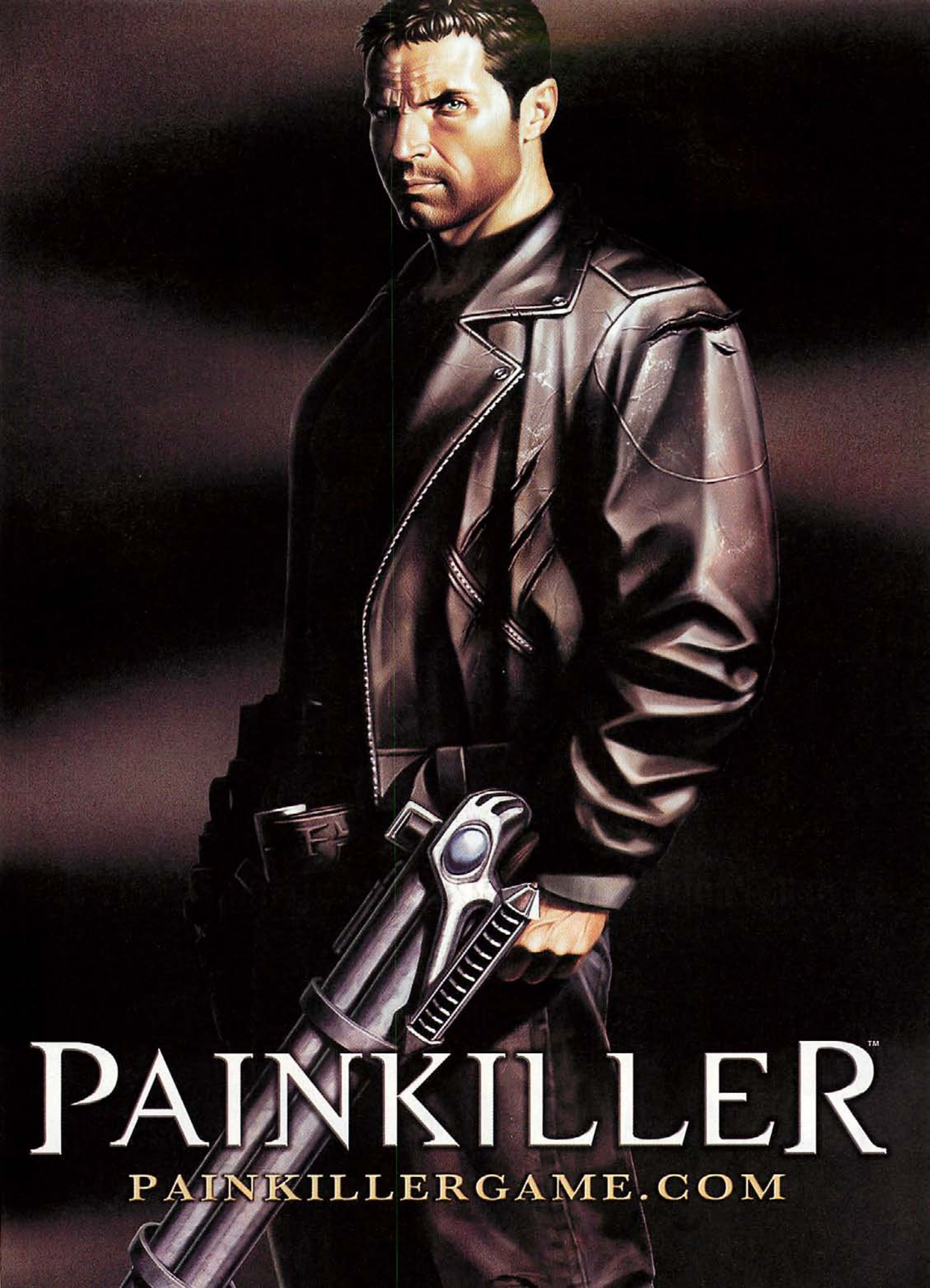
PLAYS BEST ON ALIENWARE

POWERED BY gameSpy

PEOPLE CAN FLY

DREAMCATCHER

© 2003 DreamCatcher Interactive Inc. DreamCatcher design and mark are registered trademarks of DreamCatcher Interactive Inc. GameSpy and the "Powered by GameSpy" design are trademarks of GameSpy Industries, Inc. Alienware is a registered trademark of Alienware Corporation. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox Logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Software platform logo (TM and ©) 2003 IEMA. All other brands, product names and logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners. All rights reserved.


PAINKILLER™
PAINKILLERGAME.COM

From Ensemble Studios,
the creators of Age of Empires®

# A new chapter in battle. A new danger emerges.

*Age of Mythology – The Titans* is your next great conquest. Utilize the enormous Titans, promote units to heroes, and reuse god powers to lead the Atlanteans to global domination. Embark on a brand new single-player campaign and call on 12 new god powers to lift the Atlanteans to supremacy. Harness and wield the force of 10 new mythological units so that the sun may never set on the Atlantis empire. The battle for heaven and earth continues.



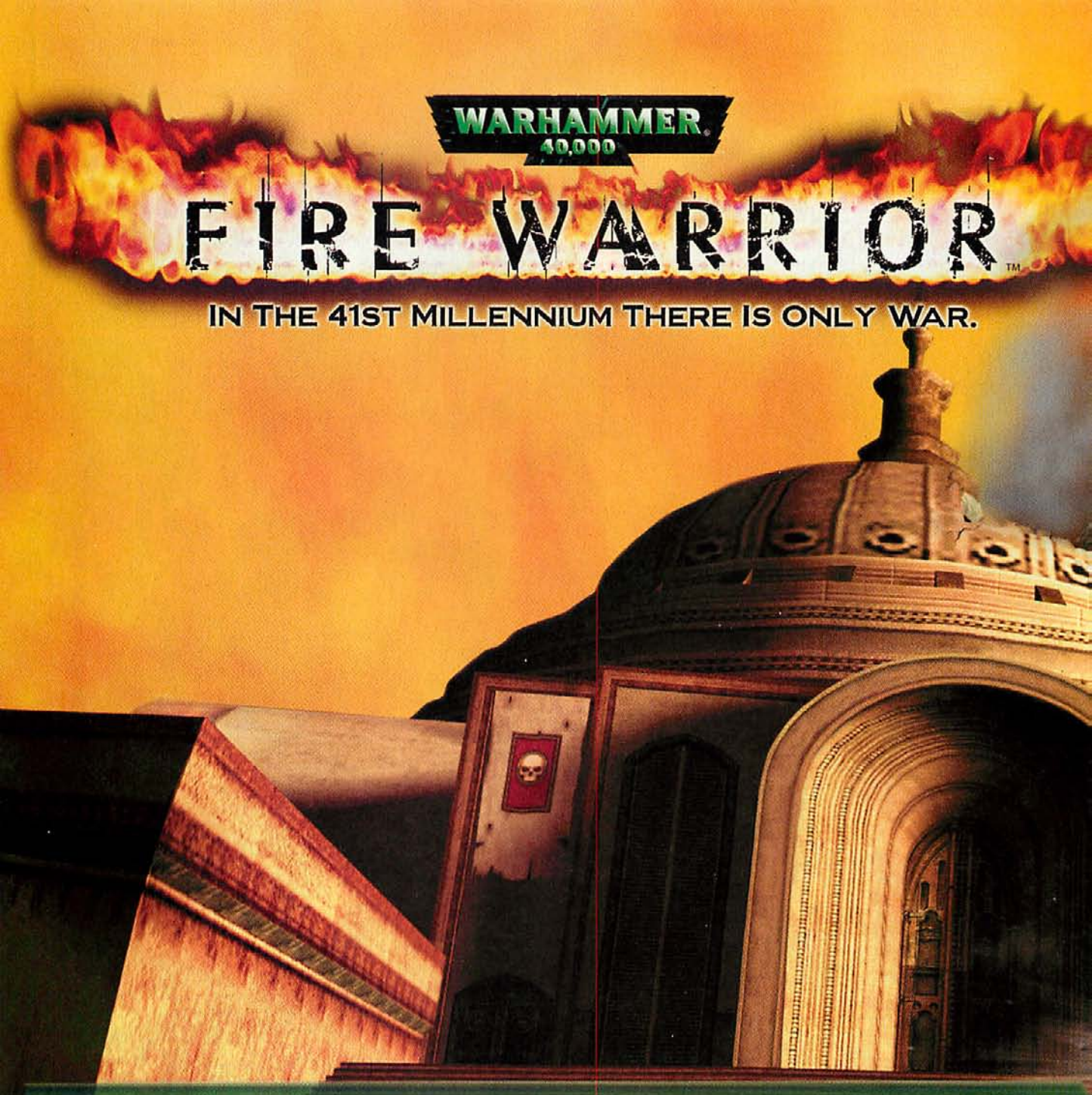



AGE of MYTHOLOGY
The TITANS
EXPANSION
www.ageofmythology.com
Microsoft game studios
ENSEMBLE STUDIOS
TEEN
T
Blood
Violence
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
BOARD GAME AVAILABLE FROM
EAGLE GAMES
SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE NOW
SUNSTORM ELSE
©2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, the Microsoft Game Studios logo, Age of Mythology, Age of Empires and Ensemble Studios are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Other products, logos, and company names mentioned herein may be trademarks of their respective owners. The ESRB rating icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

WARHAMMER 40,000

# FIRE WARRIOR™

IN THE 41ST MILLENNIUM THERE IS ONLY WAR.





INTENSE FIRST-PERSON ACTION ACROSS 21 LEVELS



SURVIVE A 24-HOUR DESCENT INTO CHAOS



ENCOUNTER TREACHERY, BETRAYAL AND HORROR



MULTI-PLAYER ONLINE SUPPORT

MATURE 17+

M

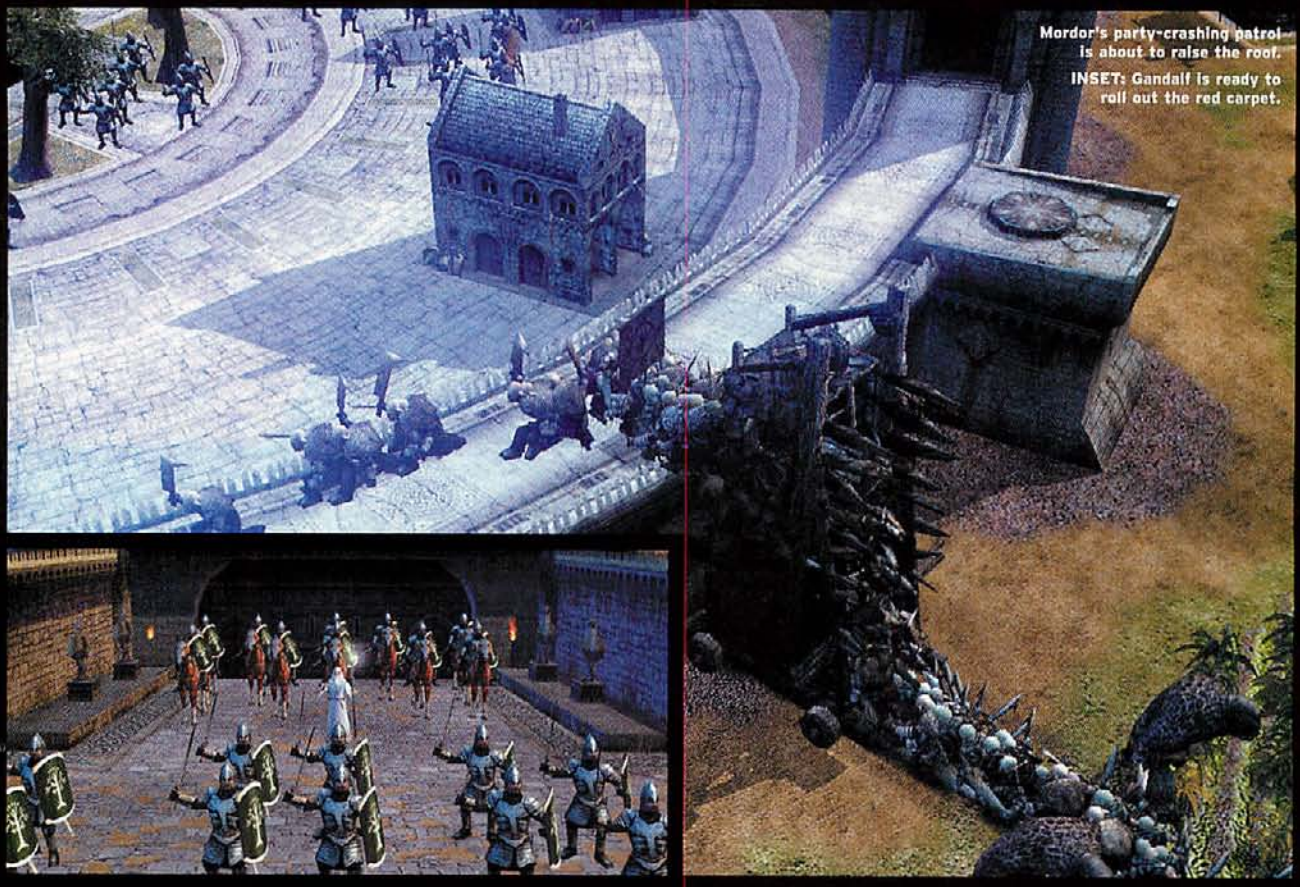
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence

Blood and Gore

All materials © Copyright Games Workshop Limited 2003 unless otherwise stated. All Rights Reserved. Fire Warrior, the Fire Warrior logo, the GWI logo, Games Workshop, the Games Workshop logo, Kais, Space Marine, Space Marine chapter logos, Tau, the Tau caste designations, Warhammer, Warhammer 40,000 Device and all associated races, race insignia, marks, places, characters, illustrations and images from the Fire Warrior game and the Warhammer 40,000 universe are either ®, ™ and/or © Games Workshop Ltd 2000-2003, variably registered in the UK and other countries around the world, and used under license. All Rights Reserved. GameSpy and the "Powered by GameSpy" design are trademarks of GameSpy Industries, Inc. All rights reserved. The Source Code for the Fire Warrior game © 2003 THQ Inc. THQ and the THQ logo are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of THQ Inc. All Rights Reserved. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.


NAME: IRWIN FINKLE
SCREEN NAME: THE EXTIRWINATOR
PROFESSION: HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
SPECS: HUSBAND, FATHER OF FOUR
WEAPON OF CHOICE:
PLASMA GUN
NOTES: COLD-BLOODED KILLER WHO WON'T THINK TWICE ABOUT PUTTING ONE IN THE BACK OF THE HEAD OF HIS ENEMIES.
TURN-ONS: "PREYING ON YOU AND OTHERS WITH WEAK SCREEN NAMES."
FAVORITE PREY: CHAOS RAPTOR
MANTRA: ONLY IN DEATH DOES DUTY END.
GAMES WORKSHOP INTERACTIVE
PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE
POWERED BY gamespy
THQ
www.thq.com

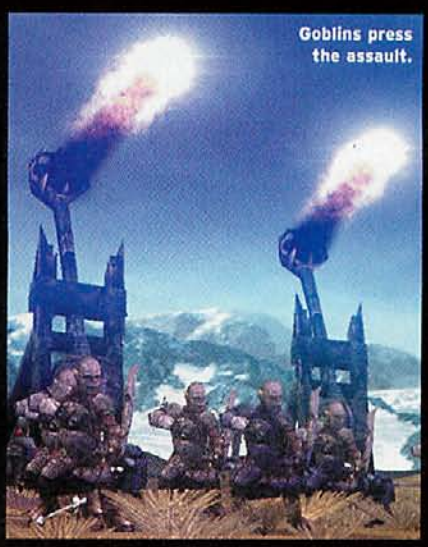


Mordor's party-crashing patrol is about to raise the roof.

INSET: Gandalf is ready to roll out the red carpet.



Batter up!



Goblins press the assault.

# THE BATTLE FOR

## And one RTS to rule them all By Darren Gladstone

# MIDDLE-EARTH

Hundreds of troops are massing at the gates of Gondor—trolls, treants, orcs, lumbering oliphants—and all are ready to wage the battle for Middle-earth. Borrowing heavily from the imagery of the third movie, *Return of the King*, the new RTS in development at EA's Los Angeles studio features climactic scenes that "put you right in the middle of all the massive battles from the movies," says executive producer Mark Skaggs. Seeing it firsthand, however, is to believe this Tolkien-esque RTS treatment in action.



There will be about nine mounted units (like these pesky pachyderms).

**The Battle for Middle-earth will feature climactic battle scenes evocative of Return of the King.**



One of many massive melees to be had.

## C&C: RINGS

The game has only been in development for six months, but the team is off to a fast start. That's because *Battle for Middle-earth* is based on the *C&C: Generals* engine, and the developers are veterans of *Generals* and *Red Alert 2*. The engine supports gorgeous 3D environments, which are alive with swaying grass and weather effects. Enormous, imposing castles hold lots of nasty surprises, including catapults, boiling oil, and pit traps.

Choosing the evil campaign, you'll have vast hordes at your disposal: Trolls can grab trees to batter enemies and walls; oliphants can be used as offensive units and troop transports; orcs ride wargs into battle; and the nazgul fly overhead, terrorizing troops.

Not only do attackers have huge numbers, they also have awesome siege weapons: catapults, battering rams, and giant siege towers. Once one of these towers has lowered on a wall, orcs can stream through it like a gate.

Against such evil, how can anything survive? The forces of good always seem outnumbered, but they tend to have friends. The good campaign gives players command of Rohan soldiers; the people of Gondor; the elves of Rivendell; treants; armies of the undead; and, of course, heroes such as Aragorn, Gimli, and Gandalf.

## GET READY TO RUMBLE

What you've got to see, though, is when they all come together in one staggering fight. While far from optimized, one staged melee had upward of 700 units onscreen at once. The units chugged a little, but they formed battle lines and waded into battle. Thankfully, you don't have to control all this onscreen action at once. More akin to the *Total War* series, you're in command of battalions. You set formations and such, but when a battle commences, individual units take advantage of the A.I. to break from formation; some units can be selected and redirected by clicking and dragging.

For those wondering if you'll need a 3GHz system to run it, Skaggs says, "You'll be able to run the game on a relatively low-end [1GHz] system that could support *Generals: Zero Hour*, but it won't look nearly as good on whatever monster rig is out."

Obviously, there remains much to be done. Dustin Browder, the energetic design director, explained that some of the areas awaiting completion include the interface and the resource management (in the game, Mordor's camps just churn out monsters, while Gondor relies on a farm economy). Browder is really excited about a new multiplayer mode he's looking to incorporate into the final game. This dynamic-warfare approach allows a bunch of people to participate in several smaller skirmishes leading up to a massive battle. For example, if you're playing as Rohan and can beat off some orc hordes in a skirmish, you can join in the larger battle after your victory and ride in with extra troops to back up your buddy. There's a whole lot more to this game than we have room to say here, but rest assured we'll get you more info before the game ships late next year.

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS
DEVELOPER: EA LOS ANGELES
GENRE: REAL-TIME STRATEGY
RELEASE DATE: Q4 2004


Air patrol adds ambiance.


They'll be back.


Need a lift?

# TERMINATOR 3: WAR OF THE MACHINES

## Ah-nold takes to the Battlefield

By Darren Gladstone

Throughout the *Terminator* trilogy, we get glimpses of mankind's last desperate days against the machines. Now we find ourselves picking sides: Tech-com (the humans) fights Skynet in a game that amounts to *Battlefield 2032*.

Despite being *Battlefield*-aholics, we had serious concerns that this was a quick cash-in like other recent blockbuster-licensed titles that shall remain nameless. It didn't help that European developer Clevers Games has been operating in relative secrecy.

However, a recent demo build allayed some of our fears. "Our goal was to re-create the battles from the *Terminator* movies," says David Brown from Atari. Like the films' depiction of a bleak, war-torn future, there's a lot of detail in the few environments that we explored. In the 10 levels we saw, most battles take place in burned-out cityscapes, while two occur in the present day—Judgment Day—at the labs and military base where the revolution starts.

**There's a very authentic feel to what we've seen so far.**

While play modes themselves don't seem all that varied (Mission, Dominate, and Team Deathmatch), the choices of combatants are cool. Humans are obviously the more straightforward forces here. You've got hunters and heavy hunters armed with conventional arms, plasma weapons, SMAW rockets, and Terminator-busting gear like Gatling guns. Scouts come armed with sniper rifles, and you need a supply guy. As in the movies, humans drive beat-up old pickup trucks equipped with various heavy firearms.

The more dynamic forces, though, are the Terminator troops. You can control the T900S and T900 Heavy models that walk in guns blazing, or you can choose to be a cyborg infiltrator that can sneak behind enemy lines undetected. Those who want to scout the terrain can control the tiny FK flying robots that zip all over the map. As you can gather, the robotic forces don't really need to hop into vehicles à la *Battlefield* because, well, they *are* the vehicles. Take the T1, for instance. This hulking treaded robot is armed with twin Gatling guns.

There's a very authentic feel to what we've played so far. From the wire-frame overhead maps to Terminator vision that has line code processing down one side of the screen, we can see where the game is headed, even in this early state. While not due until year's end, there's enough here to make us look forward to the future.

**GAME STATS**
PUBLISHER: ATARI
DEVELOPER: CLEVERS GAMES
GENRE: FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER
RELEASE DATE: Q4 2003


AMD
Show me every bead of
sweat on every brow of the minions
I now rule.
AMD me.
AMD 64 Athlon FX
Introducing the AMD Athlon™ 64 FX processor. Simply the most amazing gaming engine there is. See the bloodshot eyes of your quivering enemy. Get all the burning rubber, flying sparks, and white knuckles you can take. Ramp up from 32- to 64-bit and you get the power to wreak serious havoc. Long may you reign. Get the AMD Athlon 64 FX edge at www.amd.com/athlon64fx
© 2003 Advanced Micro Devices, Inc. All rights reserved. AMD, the AMD Arrow logo, AMD Athlon, and combinations thereof are trademarks of Advanced Micro Devices, Inc. Far Cry™ screenshots courtesy of Ubi Soft Entertainment. Far Cry (PC Version) © 2003 Crytek Studios. All rights reserved. Published by Ubi Soft Entertainment. Far Cry and Ubi Soft are trademarks of Ubi Soft Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries.

The greatest gladiator sport ever created is redefined for 2004. Now, experience more than double the content of our previous model with refinements for the discriminating thrill seeker who likes their action fast, futuristic and gloriously bloody.

We introduce: the Unreal® Tournament range of vehicles. Just one of the massive new additions that comes standard with the 2004 edition. Pleasing to the eye, powerful to the touch, punishing to the enemy.







2004 LEVIATHAN
shown with optional xenon headlights

For those who wish to pamper themselves with the steely feel of an upgraded Link Gun, the gut-twisting speed of a space fighter and the piquant smell of fresh blood... your game has arrived.





Pilot over land, sky and space, across 40+ all-new maps – including some for those that consider themselves 'professional' combatants. Revel in new weapon details (like optional dual assault rifles), a fresh Assault mode, a brand new Onslaught mode and the return of some nefarious characters.



PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

The way it's meant to be played. NVIDIA

NVIDIA $1,000,000 Unreal CONTEST

RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more ratings information.

UNREAL® TOURNAMENT 2004 © 2003 Epic Games Inc. Unreal and the Unreal logo are registered trademarks of Epic Games Inc. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. All other trademarks and trade names are the property of their respective owners. Unreal Tournament 2004 was created by Epic Games Inc. and Digital Extremes. Manufactured and marketed by Atari, Inc., New York, NY.

# The New Unreal Tournament is here.



## Models

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Land | SCORPION | 4X4 | Subwoofer | Gear Ratios: -0.5, 0.4, 0.65, 0.85, 1.1 |
| Land | AW-X | 20.0L | 6 Airbags | AKA "GOLIATH." Chassis Dimensions: 27.2 x 10.2 x 5.6 ft |
| Land | Liandri DH-85 | 4x4 | Air Conditioning | S-73 'SkyMine' anti-personnel and G87f anti-aircraft turret |
| Land | LEVIATHAN | Diesel | All Season Floor Mats | The family transport (seats 6). "Visit" the enemy base... |
| Air | J-1280G Raptor | Attack | 4 gyroscopic cup-holders | Automatic quantum-phased disruption bolt launcher |
| Air | MANTA | Hovercraft | In-door Med-Kit | 0-40 MPH: 1.6 seconds Top speed: 115.2 MPH |
| Space | FIGHTER H. | Undisclosed | Trunk Organizer | 18-way power seat fits one humanoid comfortably |
| Space | FIGHTER SK. | Undisclosed | Xenon Lights | For the most demanding alien warrior |

## Colors

SMOG GRAY | REBEL RED | SUNRISE BLACK | BLACK 'n' BLUE

DIRTNAP | SORTOFGREEN | DAY-OLD BRUISE | NUCLEAR WINTER

All options are subject to change.

## Reload. Rev Up. Ride Out.

Unreal TOURNAMENT 2004

Test drives available – check www.unrealtournament.com for details.

$10 discount available for 2003 model owners via mail-in rebate with proof of purchase.

EPIC GAMES

DIGITAL EXTREMES

ATARI


Who says strategy games can't be violent?


What the hell is that Nazi doing in powered armor?




"I can't feel my legs!"

# SILENT STORM

Russian turn-based strategy provides a silent, but deadly, alternative By

The glory days of turn-based strategy games seem long gone. Classics like *X-Com* have been overshadowed by countless waves of slick-looking *WarCraft* wannabes and *Command & Conquer* clones. But Russian developer Nival Interactive is firing back with the graphically detailed *Silent Storm*. Think you won't like hitting that End Turn button and waiting? Think again.


"This is what I get for not bringing enough change for the toll booth."

## THE ART OF WAR

The screenshots we originally saw looked good, but c'mon, a turn-based strategy game that operates with fully 3D characters and objects in a 3D world? Well, after rotating the camera a couple of times, we're ready to eat our words. *Storm* boasts solid graphics on par with those of *Commandos 2* (if not better). What Eidos' title can't replicate, though, are *Storm*'s fully destructible maps. Glass shatters, cars explode, buildings blow up—you get the idea.

OK, so it looks great. Big deal—just about any game can do that these days. How does it play? The best way to describe *Silent Storm* is *X-Com* and *Commandos* waging war on *Jagged Alliance*. While there promises to be a good story linking all the action together, Encore senior producer Eric DeMilt says that the game boasts a flexible mission structure. That means while you can carve your way through the 24 missions throughout Europe, there is no one right way to play.

To emphasize the flexibility in *Silent Storm*, random encounters and the ability to kill enemy units in countless ways ensure you won't have the same experience twice. You're limited only by your creativity: shoot troops through windows or walls, catch 'em with a ricochet, or shoot that acetylene tank to blow up a building and bury the enemy under a couple tons of rubble.

Who's up for the job? After casting your lot with the Axis or Allies, select a pre-fab character or customize your own G.I. Joe from the ground up. You'll get the chance to draft about 40 characters, 20 for each campaign, each with different stats and specialties.

There are six classes: grenadier, sniper, soldier, medic, scout, and engineer. Your class, however, does not limit your choice of weapon—even a medic can handle firearms. He won't be as effective with it as a properly trained grunt, but don't get the idea that the doc is defenseless! As a rule of thumb, though, choose weapons best suited to each class, and your squad will act with grace under fire.

Each class has a combination of nine basic skills: firearms, burst fire, sniper fire, throwing grenades and knives, hand-to-hand combat, medicine, engineering, stealth, and detection. Skills grow as they are used. In addition to the nine basic skills, Nival is planning to introduce about 30 secondary ones. These secondary skills will be earned with a branching skill tree, similar to the style used in *Diablo II*.

**Think *X-Com* and *Commandos* waging war on *Jagged Alliance*.**



## JUST LIKE BEING THERE...

Now that you've got your gear stowed, you should know about the mission in question. Gathered together by a secret government agency, your orders are simple: conduct covert operations to sabotage the enemy's war efforts. "It's World War II in 1943," DeMilt says, "but just about everything else is different." Oh, don't worry. You'll be able to arm your troops with roughly 75 true-to-life weapons from the era, but when exactly did Germany make it into Northern England?

As you slowly uncover a clandestine plot, you'll ship off to England, Germany, and Russia. Along the way, there will be plenty of traveling to do, with underground bunkers, secret laboratories, quaint villages, and dark forests to explore. The main objective of all your missions is gathering information—but how you choose to do it is totally up to you. You can steal, kidnap, assassinate, kill for kicks, or just be plain sneaky. DeMilt promises that toward the end, you'll start finding secret weapons and some science-fiction twists.

When we heard about this game back in February, we didn't know if it would make it Stateside. Thanks to Encore's last-minute scoop-up, this game should be showing up on store shelves by the time you read this. To be honest, we're looking forward to *Silent Storm*. If the final play balancing, A.I. tweaking, and voice acting (not to criticize our developer friends overseas, but please leave the English dialogue to the pros) are in place, we'll sign up for duty.

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: ENCORE
DEVELOPER: NIVAL INTERACTIVE
GENRE: STRATEGY
RELEASE DATE: Q4 2003

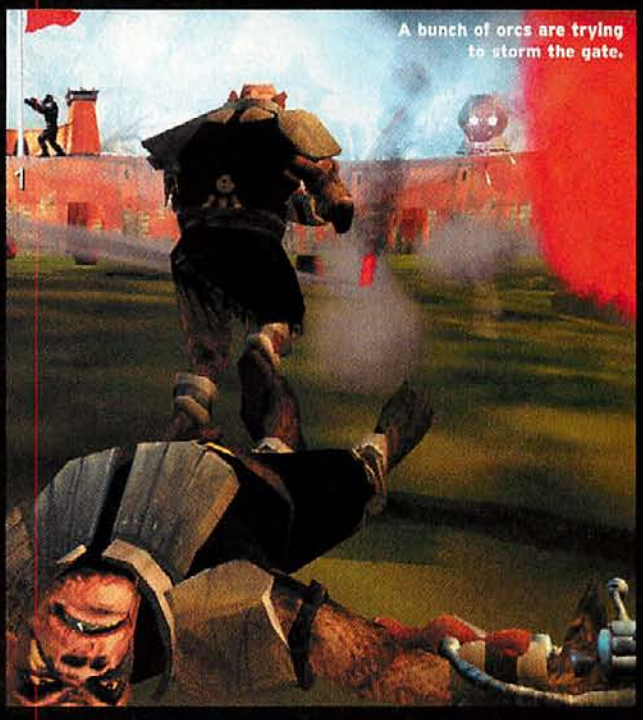
**en Gladstone**



Say hello to my leetle friend.



You'll have 17 weapons to fire at will.



A bunch of orcs are trying to storm the gate.

# ARMED & DANGE

This game is seriously messed up—and that's a good thing By Darren Glads

Something is very, very wrong with the guys at development house Planet Moon. For them to create a game like *Armed & Dangerous*, there would have to be. Of the few levels shown recently, it's easy to see that *A&D* is sick, twisted, and wrong—but it made me laugh my ass off. If not because of the Monty-Python-meets-Red-Dwarf-esque dialogue that litters the game, then because of the random ways you can destro—err—interact with the world by using the strangest arsenal ever conceived.

## NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

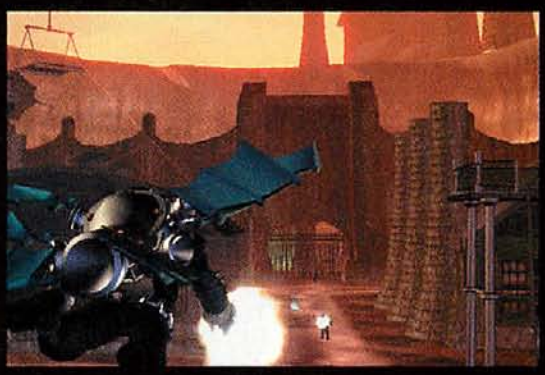
This isn't totally out of left field for the developers that conceived the bizarre *Giants: Citizen Kabuto*. The plot behind the latest game: A planet is enslaved by thuggish orc-like creatures, and you've been hired to clean house. In short, it's a wanton orgy of death peppered with jokes and ridiculous moments throughout its 21 levels. When you do reach one of those slow bits between firefights, just lob a sticky bomb onto some sheep...or a penguin...or a—well, you get the idea. In one mission, you're told to blow up a few structures. Not certain which ones need demolishing? Look for the giant blinking arrow and big bull's-eye painted on the side of the house. The whole "wade in and kill everything that moves" gameplay may not be earth-shaking, but just about everything else about this title is. Literally.

It's tough to pick our favorite weapon for this game. One candidate is the topsy-turvy, which is basically a giant corkscrew—simply twist into the ground and watch as the entire world (and the game screen) flips upside down. Seeing people fall off the planet and then come crashing back down moments later is a great stress killer. How about the world's smallest black hole, a vortex that sucks everything nearby into nothingness? Or you can try targeting a couple of orcs with a shark gun. Pull the trigger and you'll see a dorsal fin carving through the ground as it heads toward its prey. Anybody who's gone to a curry house knows what to expect from the vindaloo launcher—it fires homing missiles loaded with the most deadly spices in the universe.


Land shark!

In addition to all the craziness, you'll still get those ho-hum machine guns, sniper rifles, and rocket launchers. Some normal-ish weapons need to fill out the 17-odd arms you'll have to choose from in *A&D*. That number doesn't include the various turrets, stationary guns, and rocket cannons you can use on your excursions to blow up the opposition and local real estate.

**When you reach one of those slow bits between firefights, just lob a sticky bomb onto some sheep...or a penguin...**




"That black hole behind me? Ah, that's nothing...."

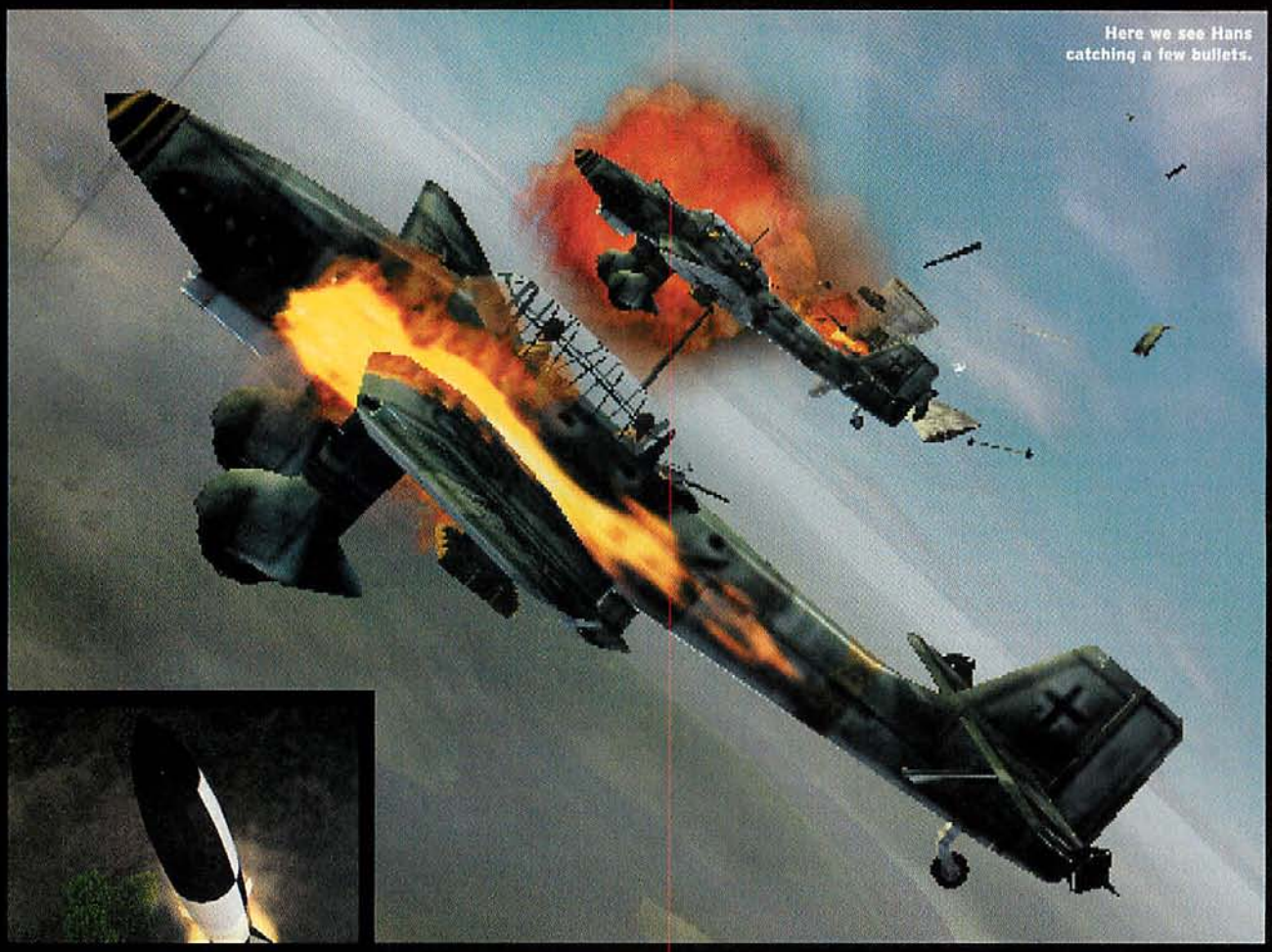
## BAND OF DUMB MOTHERS

Although there are no multiplayer options, you're far from alone. Like the recently released *Freedom Fighters*, you have A.I.-controlled troopers to back you up in the heat of battle. Heading up this squad is Roman (you) the blood-and ale-thirsty soldier. Also along for the ride are Jonesy the mole man; Q1-11, the imperial death-dealing robot; and a very Gollum-like Rexus. Since the focus is on frantic action, you can give them only simple directions, like follow close behind or stay put. And trust us: You want to keep them close by. If not for the extra firepower, at least for some conversation.

What we've seen thus far seems fairly polished and graphically clean. It won't blow you away like *Half-Life 2*'s graphics will, but the comic mayhem we've come to expect from the Planet Moon gang translates well in this third-person action shooter. The game is scheduled to ship shortly after this issue hits stands, and if what we've played is any indication of the final product, you'll want to check out for yourself just how warped this game is.

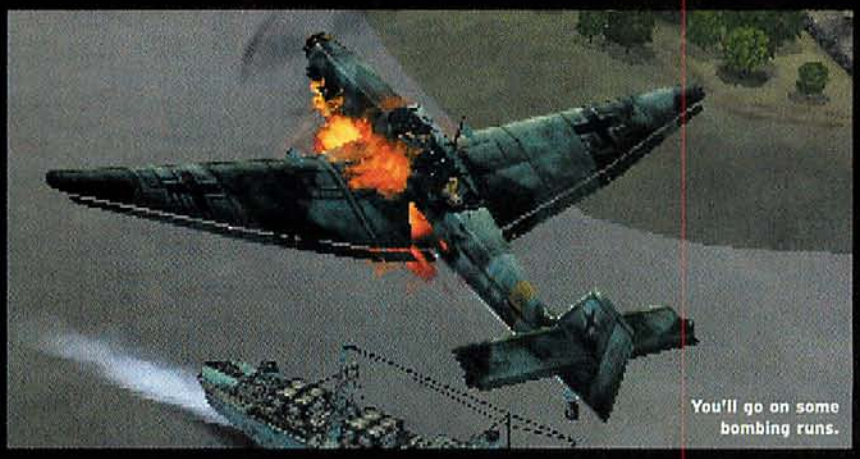
**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: LUCASARTS
DEVELOPER: PLANET MOON
GENRE: ACTION
RELEASE DATE: Q4 2003



Here we see Hans catching a few bullets.





You'll go on some bombing runs.



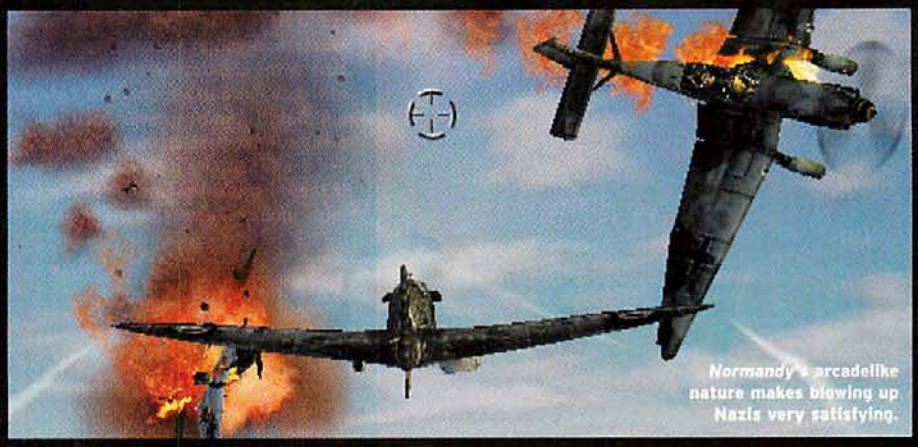
Look–a secret weapon over Normandy!

# SECRET WEAPONS

Sticking it to the Third Reich **By Ryan Scott**

It's scientifically proven that gamers love the following three activities: zooming around in fast vehicles, blowing stuff up, and fighting Nazis. LucasArts' *Secret Weapons Over Normandy* aims to satiate these all-consuming needs with high-flying, arcade-style goodness.

Developer Totally Games has been behind such beloved classics as *Battlehawks 1942* and *Their Finest Hour: The Battle of Britain,* as well as the *X-Wing* and *TIE Fighter* franchises. Today, the spiritual successor to LucasArts' classic *Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe* is just about ready for takeoff. *Normandy* flies players through a 30-something-mission tour of duty, encompassing 15 separate World War II–era campaigns that range from the Battle of Dunkirk to the eventual invasion of Normandy itself. These objective-based missions focus on air-to-air and air-to-ground combat and span several continents, including Europe, Africa, and Asia.



*Normandy*'s arcadelike nature makes blowing up Nazis very satisfying.

**Arcade-style physics and controls rule the skies over *Normandy*, making it easy for most anyone to pick up and play.**

### I'LL FLY AWAY

But what about the planes, you ask? *Normandy* offers a sizable selection of aircraft for you to pilot. Twenty-three beautifully crafted planes are at your disposal, including B-17s, P-38s, and Spitfires. You can even expand your hangar by stealing a few experimental German planes during certain missions—and nothing says "stick it to them" like killing Nazis with their own planes, right? A lot of attention has been paid to each of these babies, too. Just check out the exacting level of detail: All are authentic-looking and visually impressive, right down to the bullet holes in the fuselage and reflections in the windows.

The place where Totally Games departs from its more flight-simlike roots is in the way the action unfolds. Arcade-style physics and controls rule the skies over *Normandy,* making it easy for most anyone to pick up and play. Piloting and gunplay are fast and loose, free of the daunting plethora of gauges and levers present in many similar games. Indeed, this is no traditional flight simulator—realism takes a backseat to death-defying stunts and cool explosions. You can even speed up and slow down time in order to get a better handle on your dastardly foes. While hardcore flight-sim fans might be a bit put off by this style of play, there's certainly a lot to be said for simplicity. If you just want to fly around and gun down Nazis, chances are you'll enjoy the liberties *Normandy* has taken.

### PLAY IT ALONE

Missions are objective based, each with their own primary and secondary goals—along with a few hidden objectives here and there. As you make your way through the campaigns, you'll earn points based on your achievements. These points can be spent on aircraft upgrades: Speed enhancements, better handling, tougher exteriors, bigger guns, and cool explosives are all available for the picking. Over 100 upgrades are available, although they're plane specific, meaning you'll be playing through the game a whole lot if you plan on decking out every last craft to its fullest potential.

We've got bad news, though: There won't be a multiplayer mode for the PC version. Why, God, why? There's no good answer to this question (considering that the console versions will support multiplayer), but don't eject yet. The game may still boast a built-in mission editor, allowing you to create custom missions and campaigns. Here's hoping. Considering Totally Games' pedigree, we still have high hopes that *Secret Weapons Over Normandy* will soar when it comes out for the holidays.





Here's one of the 23 planes you'll fly.

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: LUCASARTS
DEVELOPER: TOTALLY GAMES
GENRE: AERIAL COMBAT
RELEASE DATE: Q4 2003

# OVER NORMANDY

# OUTTA SIGHT

## The best games you've never seen

By Scott Steinberg



Wanted Guns




Football Deluxe

**It's truly an odd month—we've got a Western, a soccer manager, and a title with religious overtones in the offing. Apparently, gamers in Europe and South America never got the memo: Publishers claim these genres are dead. Still, we'll be eager to see if these companies can perform a few miraculous resurrections.**

### WANTED GUNS

FROM: IRIDON INTERACTIVE
GENRE: ACTION
AVAILABILITY: Q4 2003

**SPREAD THE WORD:** One-eyed former outlaw Reverend Devlin is confronted by his past when his old nemesis Santiago Pedraza comes a-calling. Set in the Wild West during the height of the Civil War, this enterprising first- and third-person shoot-'em-up boasts a zesty south-of-the-border flavor. Run enemies down with your horse or wield twin revolvers, shotguns, and crossbows against the hostile scumbags populating ghost towns, abandoned mines, and Colorado backwoods.

**BEST UNHEARD:** Well, partner, we reckon Iridon has never attempted a shooter before. For that matter, the game's Spanish development team—a first-time venture that's using the project as a career stepping stone—is hardly flush with experience. As Hollywood insiders know, Westerns have been out of style for more than a decade. But just like Eastwood coming back with a modern classic like *Unforgiven*, this gunslinger has the potential to ride into town and stir up a whole mess of trouble.

### FOOTBALL DELUXE

FROM: EVOLUXION
GENRE: SOCCER MANAGEMENT SIM
AVAILABILITY: Q1 2004

**SPREAD THE WORD:** Rumor has it, Argentines know a thing or two about soccer. If so, developer Evoluxion could score with its premier managerial simulation. Yeah, we know—ho hum. Still, this title is doing an interesting job of getting armchair coaches to the World Cup. Craft a squad, design tactics, and construct stadiums...and that's just a taste of the options offered. Other features include fan feedback, pressure-sensitive decisions, and players who actually have personalities. Just don't tell Beckham how badly you want to bag the missus.

**BEST UNHEARD:** Evoluxion? Never heard of 'em. Soccer management sims? Not exactly making us jump up and scream "Gooooooaaaaal!" More depressing still, most Americans have as much respect for the game as they do Ultimate Frisbee. However, support for the sport has grown in recent years, even if you can't catch a decent televised match without a dish. While unlikely to fly off shelves, the game could find a moderate reception with a small Stateside launch.

### ANGELS VS. DEVILS

FROM: ENIGMA SOFTWARE PRODUCTIONS
GENRE: MINIGAME-O-RAMA
AVAILABILITY: Q4 2003

**SPREAD THE WORD:** Faust meets the Olympics as God and Satan pit their minions against one another in varying 3D action sequences to see who'll really inherit the earth. Two campaigns offering 20 scenarios, 20 celestial powers, and 270 collectible magic objects promote long-term replay value, as does the LAN and Internet support. From purchasing tools between missions to flambéing cherubs for kicks, the spastic secular amusements it features should provide a little divine inspiration for all of you holy rollers out there.

**BEST UNHEARD:** Manufacturer Enigma claims the product boasts strategic and role-playing elements. At the same time, the company admits that what it's selling is basically just a package of quaint little minigames, including Annihilation (kill 'em all), Greed (a timed scavenger hunt), and Obstacle Race (enough said). Admittedly, the religious theme adds a different twist to the game, but if you replaced the seraphim and succubi with Smurfs, Fraggles, or even cute little kittens, it's still the same old coffee-break diversion.



Angels vs. Devils

# Save the Colony!




fresh GAMEPLAY GUARANTEED!




## SPACE COLONY

### The First Personality Sim Builder!

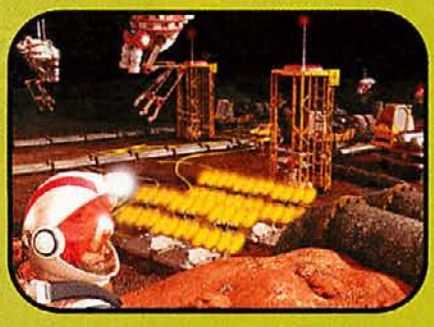
You've built the perfect simulated life on earth. Now let's see how you do with the rest of the galaxy. Welcome to Space Colony, where your life depends on an unruly group of fellow space rejects. Between managing the resources of the colony and managing the various neuroses of your fellow colonists, you may feel the vastness of space closing in on you. No one ever said life among the stars would be easy.



Watch 20 unique characters as they hunt, socialize and just get on with their weird and dysfunctional daily lives.



Manage and improve the daily life of your crew. Oxygen, power and food are vital...but there are many ways to support your people.



Be transported to other worlds, explore them and establish footholds as you play across an immersive 24 mission story.

www.spacecolonygame.com

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

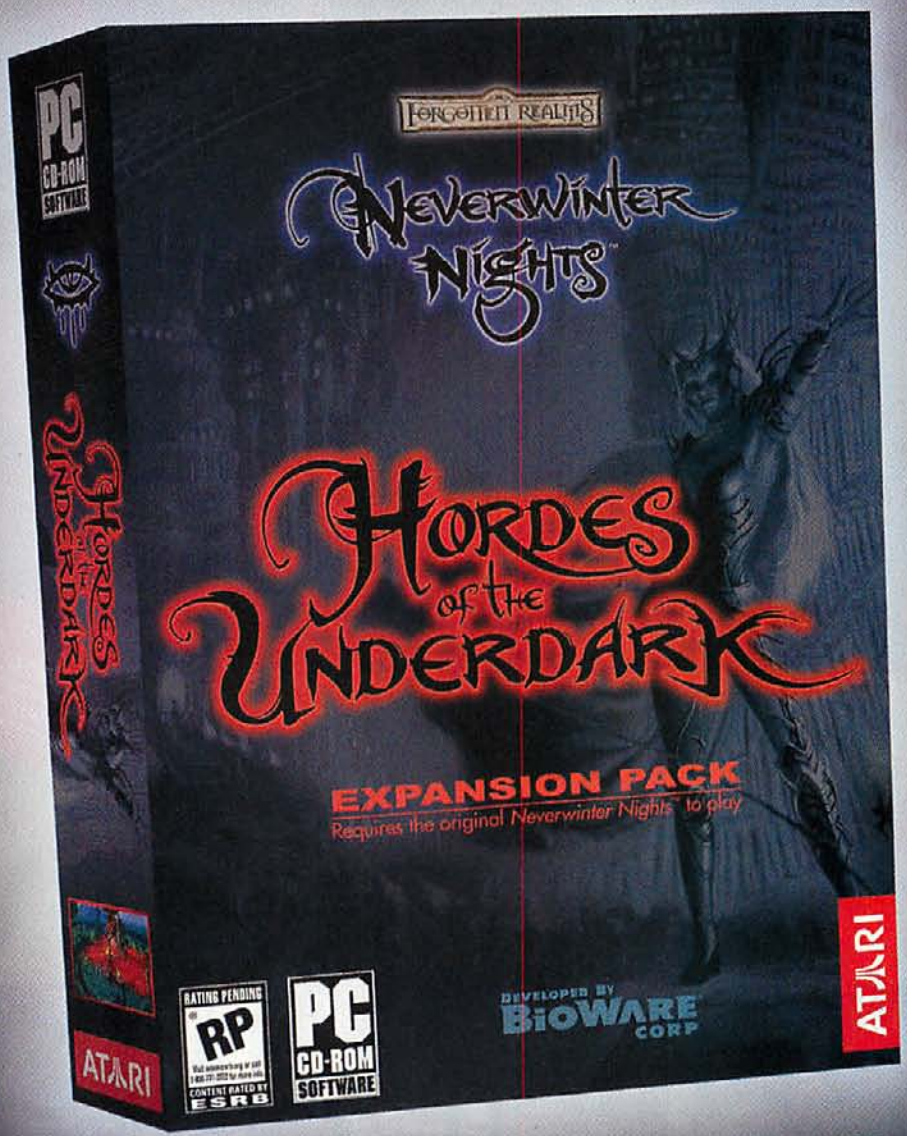
FIREFLY STUDIOS

© 2003 FireFly Studios Limited. FireFly Studios, the FireFly Studios logo, Space Colony and the Space Colony logo are trademarks of FireFly Studios. Gathering and the Gathering logo, Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. and the A Take-Two Company logo are trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. Portions © 2002 Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. All rights reserved. All other trademarks and copyrights are properties of their respective owners.

GATHERING
A TAKE-TWO COMPANY

TEEN T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

# The Best RPG Enters A Legendary D&D Realm.




## Neverwinter Nights™... a world without limits!

PRODUCTS RANGE FROM RATING PENDING TO TEEN
RP-T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

Neverwinter Nights, Hordes of the Underdark, Neverwinter Nights Gold, Forgotten Realms and the Forgotten Realms logo, Dungeons & Dragons, D&D and the Dungeons & Dragons logo, and Wizards of the Coast and its logo are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc., in the U.S.A. and other countries, and are used with permission. © 2003 Wizards. Software © 2003 Atari Interactive, Inc. All rights reserved. HASBRO and its logo are trademarks of Hasbro and are used with permission. BioWare, the BioWare Aurora Engine and the BioWare logo are trademarks of BioWare Corp. All Rights Reserved. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.







Deep beneath the earth, there is a world where evil reigns and darkness never ceases...

Now, *Neverwinter Nights*™ enters one of the most awe-inspiring realms in Dungeons & Dragons® history — the subterranean Underdark. With the *Hordes of the Underdark*™ expansion pack, experience Epic play — beyond level 30 — with bold spells like Hellball, masterful feats such as Terrifying Rage, and new prestige classes and weapons. It's a dark adventure of Epic proportions.

Not part of Neverwinter Nights™ ?
See what you've been missing.

The original *Neverwinter Nights*™ •
The *Shadows of Undrentide*™ expansion pack •
Exclusive, all-new game mods •

The most complete Neverwinter Nights™ ever:




Neverwinter Nights

Shadows of Undrentide

Atari

Licensed by:

Hasbro Consumer Products

Dungeons & Dragons

Developed By BioWare Corp

Official Wizards of the Coast Licensed Product



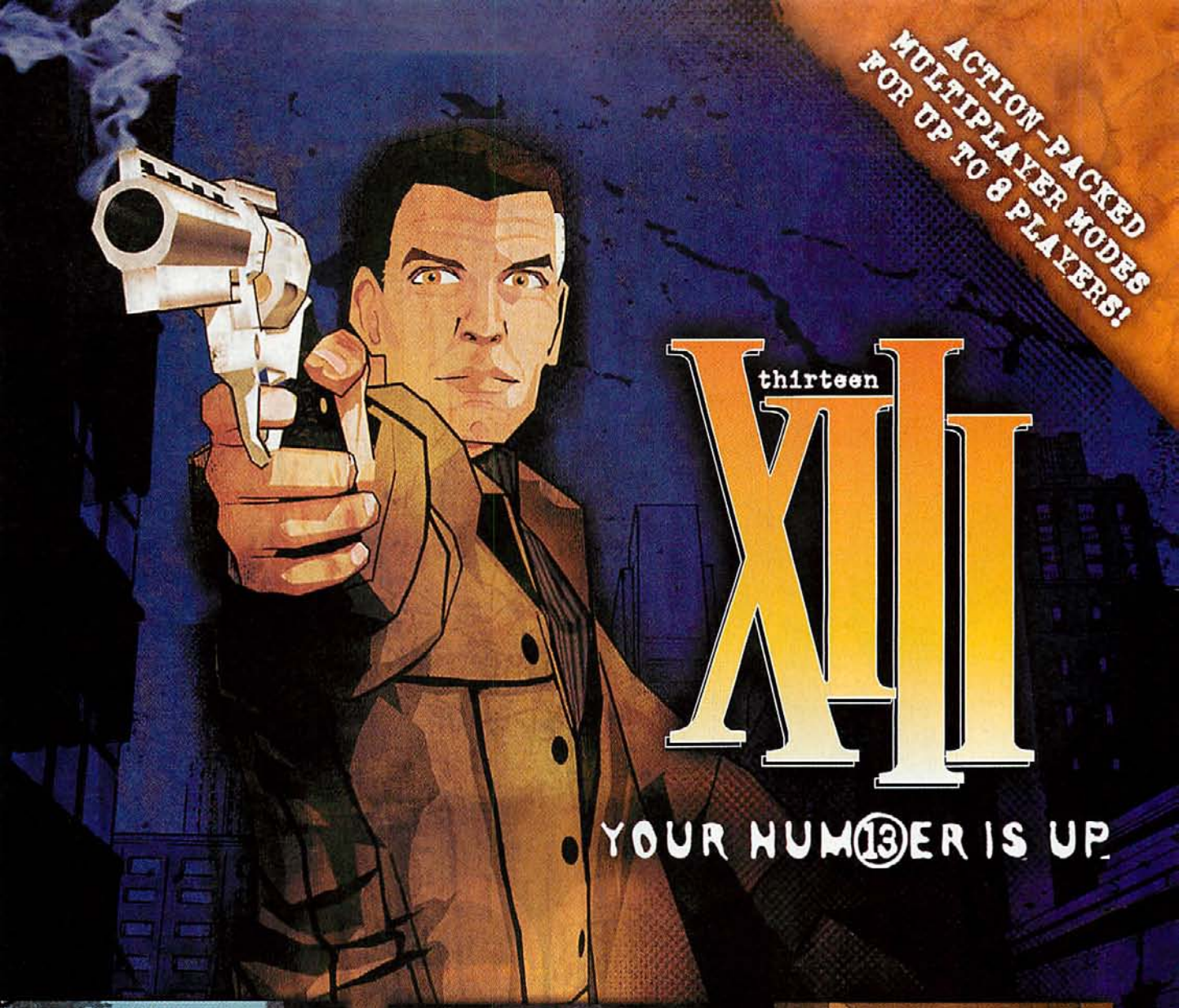

MATURE 17+
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Intense Violence

The way it's meant to be played
NVIDIA

PC
CD-ROM
SOFTWARE

©2003 Ubisoft Entertainment. All Rights Reserved. Ubisoft, ubi.com, and the Ubisoft logo are trademarks of Ubisoft Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. ©Van Hamme – Vance / Dargaud Benelux (DARGAUD-LOMBARD S.A.) 2000 DARGAUD. ©2002 All Rights Reserved. Gameloft and the Gameloft logo are registered trademarks of Gameloft S.A. NVIDIA and the NVIDIA logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of NVIDIA Corporation in the United States and/or other countries.







NEW ONLINE MULTIPLAYER MODES WITH GRAPHIC-NOVEL STYLE, PLUS A FREE LEVEL EDITOR.




GRAPHIC-NOVEL PRESENTATION WITH POP-UP WINDOWS, VISUAL AUDIO, AND FLASHBACK GRAPHICS.



A PRESIDENTIAL ASSASSINATION CONSPIRACY PLOT ENSHROUDS THE FUTURE OF AMERICA IN MYSTERY.

**www.whoisXIII.com**

gameloft

DARGAUD

Play It On ubi.com

UBISOFT™

# 101 free games

OUR DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO THE BEST FREEWARE, SHAREWARE, MODS, AND MORE

BY THE EDITORS OF CGW

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN UELAND


FREEWARE 98
SHAREWARE 101
BATTLEFIELD 1942 MODS 104
UNREAL TOURNAMENT MODS 105
HALF-LIFE MODS 106
NEVERWINTER NIGHTS MODS 108
QUAKE 3 MODS 110


**PULL YOUR HEAD OUT OF THE BARGAIN BIN** for a minute and admit something to yourself: You're a cheap bastard. It's nothing to be embarrassed about. Hell, we're cheap bastards, too. Just look at how much games cost these days. If we weren't constantly sent new titles to review, we'd be in the same boat as you. Which got us thinking—you deserve a real list of the best mods, games, and add-ons currently available.

And that's what we've done here. After painstaking hours of downloading, installing, and playing as much free gaming goodness as our PCs could handle, we can now give you the best of the best. Some games will be on this month's CD, and most will be found through our website (101games.computergaming.com)—but above all, everything here is well worth the download time.


FREE!

# freeware

## THEY PUT "FREE" IN THERE FOR A REASON

**If you know where to look, there's a wide range of freebies out there. Old ones and new ones, from tiny little time wasters to massive downloads worth their weight in gold—they're all free for the taking. You may even wonder why you aren't paying for some of these.**

### RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN: ENEMY TERRITORY




**IF THIS FANTASTIC,** multiplayer-only *RTCW* expansion cost $30, we'd tell you to rush out and buy it, so the fact that Activision is giving it away should be incentive enough for you to drop this magazine and fire up your download manager. *Enemy Territory* lets up to 32 players battle through an entire campaign, leveling up their skills and abilities in the process. It also introduces several new character classes essential to the kind of teamwork this game requires.

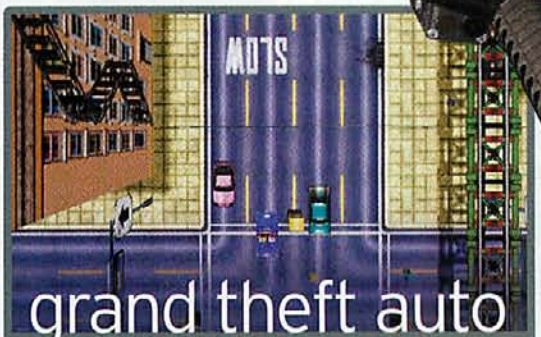
### STEEL PANTHERS: WORLD AT WAR



**COMBAT MISSION AND ITS SEQUEL** may be the best tactical WWII games on the block, but you can save a ton of money and still have a ton of fun with *Steel Panthers: World at War.* An old DOS game updated to work in Windows, it offers enough scenarios to keep any WWII buff occupied indefinitely.

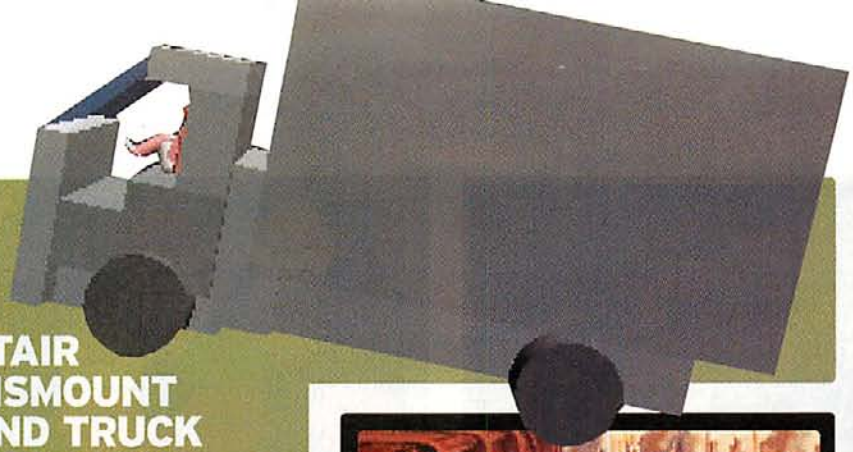
### AMERICA'S ARMY: OPERATIONS

**REALLY, YOU'VE ALREADY PAID** for this tactical shooter with your tax dollars. This online multiplayer game offers terrorist-busting action that in some ways surpasses the *Rainbow Six* series. With a sense of realism second to none, *America's Army* gives a deeper appreciation for the exacting training, preparation, and teamwork needed in the real world. We can't wait for the *Special Forces* game coming in late October.



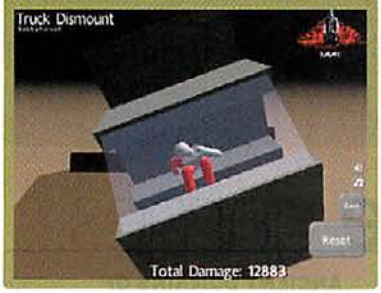

### grand theft auto

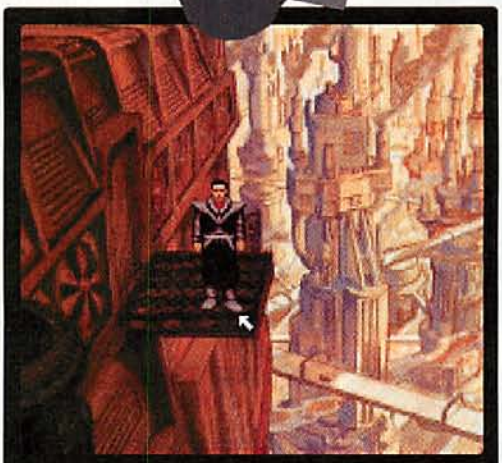
**DON'T TELL JOE LIEBERMAN,** but hidden away on Rockstar Games' website is a free complete version of the game that begat world-conquering hits *Grand Theft Auto III* and *GTA: Vice City.* Downloading this baby is a serious commitment—it's 328MB—and Rockstar is limiting the number of concurrent connections to keep its servers from crashing, but we think it's worth the effort.



## STAIR DISMOUNT AND TRUCK DISMOUNT

**IT'S CRUEL, IT'S TWISTED,** and we can't tear ourselves away. The objective? Do the most possible damage to a crash-test dummy by booting him down the stairs (*Stair Dismount*) or putting him in, on, or in front of a speeding truck (*Truck Dismount*). Good luck cracking the online high-score list—there are some really sick bastards out there.



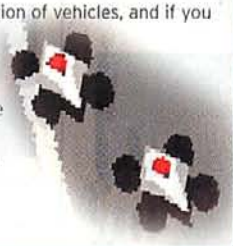
## BENEATH A STEEL SKY

**THE ADVENTURE GENRE** may be on life support, but programs like ScummVM are giving it a shot in the arm by letting players enjoy such great games of yore as *Beneath a Steel Sky*. Download either the CD version or the smaller floppy version of this outstanding cyberpunk adventure at the ScummVM site.




## generally

**A TOP-DOWN RACING GAME** with tracks confined to a single screen may not seem like much of a bargain—even if it's free—but *GeneRally* incorporates a physics engine with enough detail to keep things interesting. There's also a varied selection of vehicles, and if you can't find someone to race against, it's possible to waste hours trying to whup your ghost car.



TO FIND THIS FREEWARE AND MORE, GO TO **101GAMES.COMPUTERGAMING.COM**

# The Gray Area

## FUN WITH EMULATORS

**Emulation has always been a rather touchy subject in the gaming industry. On one hand, it's a great way to preserve many older classic games. It also showcases a lot of amazing talent, since the vast majority of emulators are fanmade. On the other hand, many game companies are highly protective of even their older properties and look on the emulation scene with contempt. Here at *CGW*, we stand somewhere in the middle. That being the case, we've compiled a list of some of the better emulation projects on the Net—but we won't tell you where you can find any games to go with them. You're on your own there.**

### APPLEWIN

Want to play *Oregon Trail*? *Karateka*? *Ultima IV*? Then check out this slick little German-made Apple IIe emulator.

### FCE ULTRA

If you're a fan of the old Nintendo Entertainment System, FCE Ultra is quite possibly the best option available for playing some of those hard-to-find older games.

### MAME



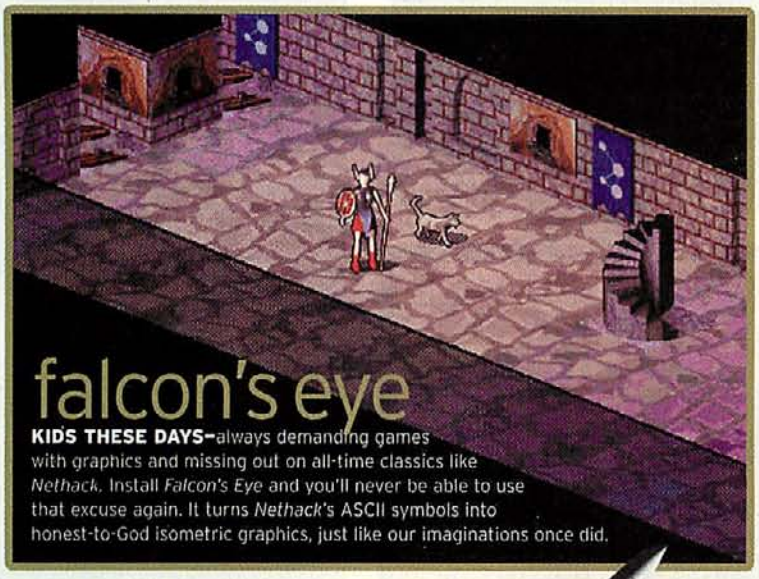
The Multiple Arcade Machine Emulator (MAME) is probably the best and best-known emulator; it's able to run an absolutely mind-boggling variety of classic arcade games. If there's a best place to start, this is it.

### SCUMMVM

Ah, those classic graphic adventures like *Maniac Mansion*. If only you could play them again. Wait—with this emulator, you can!

### UOX3

The Ultima Offline eXperiment 3 is a fanmade *Ultima Online* server emulator, handy for all the jaded old-school players who prefer the golden days of *UO*.



## falcon's eye

**KIDS THESE DAYS–**always demanding games with graphics and missing out on all-time classics like *Nethack*. Install *Falcon's Eye* and you'll never be able to use that excuse again. It turns *Nethack*'s ASCII symbols into honest-to-God isometric graphics, just like our imaginations once did.




## COLOSSUS

**WAY BACK IN 1982,** Avalon Hill published a board game called *Titan*. It featured epic battles between powerful mythical creatures, and it captured the hearts and minds of beer-swilling college geeks everywhere. Original copies now sell for more than $100 on eBay, but if you can stand not to roll tons of dice and manage large stacks of monster chits, download the elegant–and free–Java version.



## orbiter

**WANT TO FLY A SPACE SHUTTLE?** Do it (and more) for free with *Orbiter*, a soup-to-nuts space-flight simulator that can handle everything from the surface of the Earth to the far reaches of the solar system. You'll find tons of add-ons and high-res textures, and the next installment promises particle effects and other goodies.

## more **free** games...



### VANTAGE MASTER ONLINE
Not the greatest game ever, but where else will you find a free online RPG?

### PEKKA KANA 2
Side-scrolling action at its finest and free-est.

### LITTLE FIGHTER 2
You're little. You fight. You're a little fighter.

### ABUSE 2
The side-scrolling action-game extraordinaire is back.



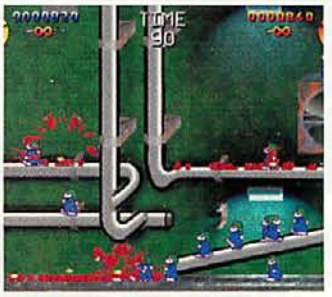
### NOTRIUM
Use *Crimsonland*-like controls to solve puzzles and escape a hostile planet.

### ANCIENT DOMAINS OF MYSTERY
Yes, it's ASCII. And yes, it's arguably better than *Nethack*.

### STICK SOLDIERS 2
Even its simplistic graphics can't bring down the gameplay.

### WAZZAL
This top-down action-adventure game plays out like pirates in outer space.

### THE ARDENNES OFFENSIVE
This *Korsun Pocket* predecessor is a fantastic strategy game with a great interface.




### BLIP & BLOP: BALLS OF STEEL
Blast Pokémon, Care Bears, Smurfs, and other icons to smithereens while you wait for the inevitable lawsuit.

STOP WASTING MONEY. GO TO
**101GAMES.COMPUTERGAMING.COM**
FOR LINKS TO THESE AND OTHER FREEBIES.

# The battle for your home continues.



# Sequel to PC Gamer's

## Command the fleet that stands between your Homeworld and the enemy that would destroy it.



Control nimble fighters, massive destroyers, and the rest of your battle-ready fleet.



Improved controls make it easy to give orders and watch battles unfold.



Combine units into strike groups that work together to combat the enemy.

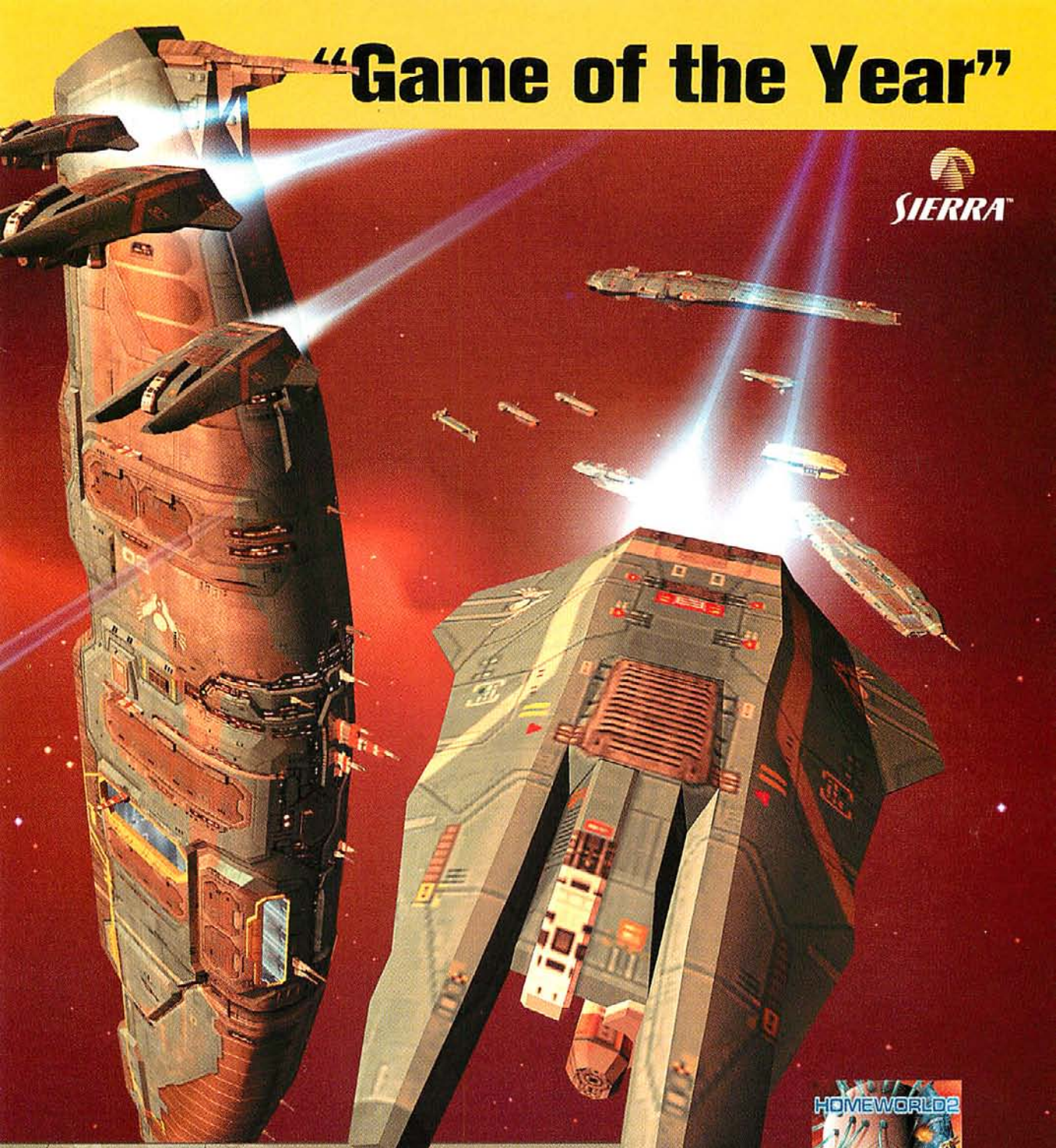


Go online for intense multi-player action with up to 6 people.

© 2003 Sierra Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Homeworld is a registered trademark and Sierra, and the Sierra logo are trademarks of Sierra Entertainment, Inc. Vivendi Universal Games and the Vivendi Universal Games Logo are trademarks of Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. Relic and the Relic logo are trademarks of Relic Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved. GameSpy and the "Powered by GameSpy" design are trademarks of GameSpy Industries, Inc. All rights reserved. All other trademarks are property of their respective owners.

# "Game of the Year"

SIERRA



A century ago, you led the Hiigarans home. Now, a deadly new enemy threatens all you've fought to create. Build vast fleets and repel aggressors, while exploring the cosmos for secrets to your survival. With intelligent ship formations, unparalleled special effects and an improved interface, this sequel to 1999's Game of the Year will once again set the standard for 3D space strategy games.




HOMEWORLD2

**Space. Strategy. Survival.**

www.homeworld2.com

TEEN T Violence

CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

VIVENDI UNIVERSAL games

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

ALIENWARE

relic ENTERTAINMENT

POWERED BY gamespy

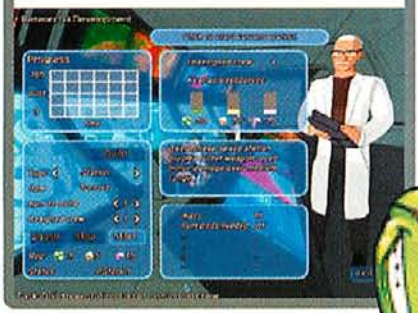
# shareware

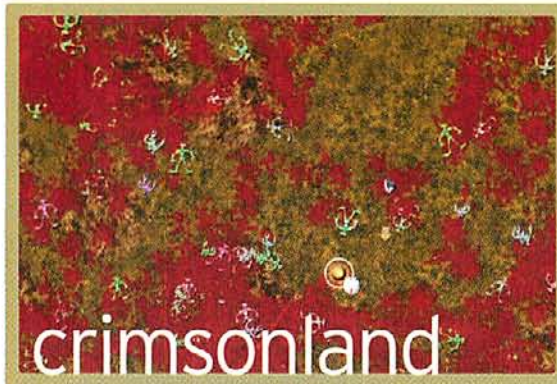
## BECAUSE SHARING IS WHAT FRIENDS DO

**Yeah, we know shareware games aren't completely free, but these "try before you buy" titles pack more gameplay into their limited demo versions than you'll find in some big-name-publisher titles. Technically, you can play the heck out of these games and never pay a cent, but we're guessing you'll spring for one or two, since they are the cream of the crop.**

### STARSCAPE

**RESOURCE COLLECTION AND MANAGEMENT,** research, galactic exploration and navigation, ship design and customized ship creation, cool art direction, fun *Asteroids*-style space combat—about the only thing missing from this ambitious action-strategy game set in space is the fat $50 price tag that a monolithic game company would slap on it. Frankly, this is the most formidable game in the bunch. Our only warning: Expect to feel compelled to cough up the registration fee after finishing the 20-minute demo—*StarScape* is just that good.





### crimsonland

**THE MOST CLAUSTROPHOBIC** third-person shooter ever earns the scarlet letters in its title by liberally drenching too-tight game levels in gallons upon gallons of blood. *Crimsonland*'s fast-paced "one man against swarming hordes" gameplay is enough to make us like it, but loads of unique power-ups and a very cool experience-point system for buying crucial character-improving perks make it an adrenaline-delivery system that earns our hard-won love.

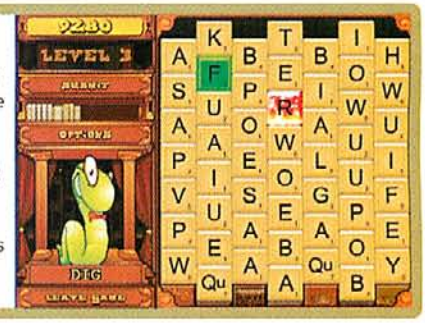
### laser squad nemesis

**FROM THE MAKERS OF X-COM** comes a game much like *X-Com*, but multiplayer in focus. This squad-based play-by-e-mail alien-hunting strategy game is seriously deep and hellaciously time consuming. The shareware version includes a tutorial, three actual e-mail matches, and unlimited hotseat play. We gave an Editor's Choice to the full version of *Laser Squad Nemesis*, so you know it's gotta be good.



### BOOKWORM

**WE'VE PAID MORE** for this word game in lost productivity and blown deadlines than we have in registration codes. *Bookworm* is ridiculously simple: Rack up a big score by hunting out words snaking through the jumble of *Scrabble*-style tiles while making sure to use up burning tiles before they hit the bottom of the screen and end the game. There's no such thing as "just one more quick game" with *Bookworm*, but damn if we haven't blown off work, loved ones, and sleep deluding ourselves that there actually is.







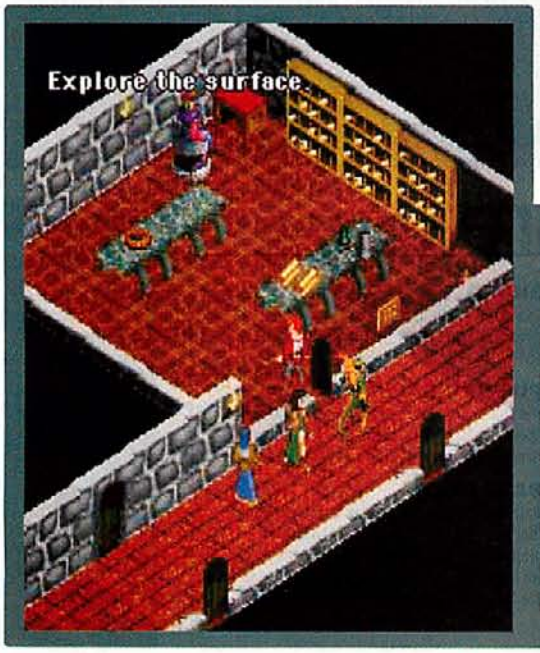

# mutant storm

**IF THE FRENETIC ACTION** wasn't so hard on our nerves, odds are we'd be playing even more *Mutant Storm*. A psycho candy-colored cross of *Robotron* and *Asteroids*, this arcade shooter is packed with 89 furious levels of pandemonium. *Mutant Storm* so expertly captures classic arcade gameplay that you fully expect to find a pizza-greased slot for quarters on the side of your PC.

# HOLLYWOOD MOGUL

**IT'S LITTLE MORE THAN A** spreadsheet program, but by adding just a little suspension of disbelief, it's astounding how completely this game captivates us. *Hollywood Mogul* finally lets us produce all of our dream movie projects, from assigning writers and hiring talent to determining advertising and production budgets, and even pimping our films for awards. It's like *Project Greenlight* without the annoyance of Ben Affleck!






GO TO **101GAMES.COMPUTERGAMING.COM** FOR LINKS TO ALL THESE GREAT GAMES.

# AVERNUM 3

**THEY WON'T WIN ANY ART AWARDS,** but Spiderweb Software's shareware RPGs are the real deal: hardcore turn-based RPGs that hearken back to the glory days of *Ultima*. *Avernum 3* is the latest. Like all Spiderweb games, it's a huge, open-ended RPG that will delight geeks who favor stats over pretty pictures. Highly recommended.

# Web Crawlin'

## OUR TOP 10 PICKS FOR GREAT GAMING WEBSITES

### FILEPLANET
**www.fileplanet.com**
GameSpy's megasite is home to a plethora of demos and patches. It's also a fantastic resource for free game mods and other media.

### GAMEHIPPO
**www.gamehippo.com**
This site has a ton of freeware for you to download, complete with rankings and reviews of what's hot. Plus, we like the goofy name.

### GAMEWORLD NETWORK
**www.gameworldnetwork.com**
Here, you'll find Web versions of several classic games, including *Space Invaders*, *Defender*, *Spy Hunter*, *Joust*, *Rampage*, and even *Simon*.

### NEVERWINTER VAULT
**nwvault.ign.com**
If you're a fan of *Neverwinter Nights*, look no further. You'll find plenty of maps, modules, monsters, characters, sound clips, and other resources for use in your own *NWN* game.

### ORISINAL
**www.orisinal.com**
Artwise, it looks like these Flash games were taken from children's books—or Hallmark cards. Still, you'll find many fun little diversions you can easily get away with playing at work.

### POPCAP GAMES
**www.popcap.com**
The geniuses behind the ever-so-addictive *Bookworm* have made other games, too. *Bejeweled*, *Typer Shark*...the list goes on.

### REFLEXIVE ARCADE
**www.reflexivearcade.com**
This site is home to *Crimsonland*, *Ricochet Xtreme*, and plenty of other high-quality shareware titles you don't want to miss.

### TIERRA ENTERTAINMENT
**www.tierraentertainment.com**
Remember those old Sierra adventure games from the '80s and '90s, like *King's Quest* and *Quest for Glory*? These guys have done some pretty good remakes of them—and they're free!

### THE UNDERDOGS
**www.the-underdogs.org**
Go here for plenty of underrated PC titles, including many old retail games now classified as "abandonware." There's good stuff to be found.

### YAHOO! GAMES
**games.yahoo.com**
The ever-popular gaming area of everyone's favorite search engine is a veritable treasure trove of Flash games spanning several genres.

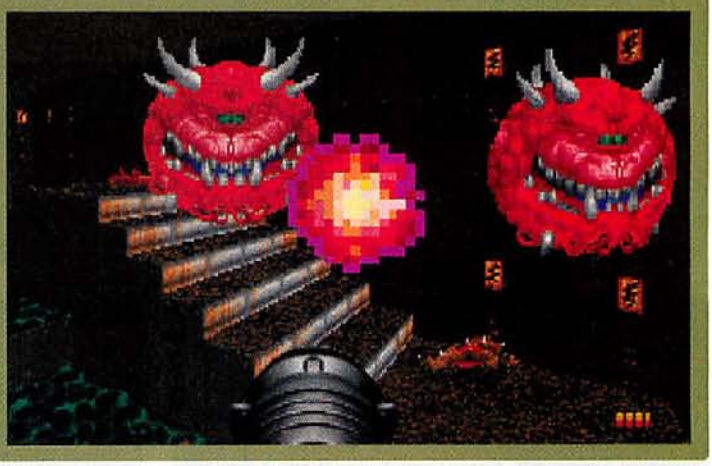


# ricochet xtreme

**A SLEW OF COOL POWER-UPS,** frenzied multiple-ball-bouncing mayhem, and a seemingly endless number of incredibly clever and challenging levels have gotten us hooked on this *Arkanoid*-style arcade game. Yeah, yeah, yeah, we know you first played this sort of brick-busting game about 10 years ago, but trust us, *Ricochet Xtreme* does a great job delivering classic gameplay all on its own.

## DOOM

**BACK IN THE DAY,** we played our graphically chunky shooters with the keyboard—and dammit, we liked it that way! While most old-school FPS games have aged about as gracefully as our own doddering editor-in-chief, *Doom* still holds up, and the shareware version is still available online (we recommend the Win95 version). Playing the original appetizer-sized portion is a great nostalgia trip for old farts and a great way for newer gamers to get a taste of history. Plus, it's still one of the scariest games you'll play...ever.



## ROCKET MANIA DELUXE

**"DAMN YOU, JASON KAPALKA!"** Those words were heard in Dana's office as we discovered this late entry to our shareware list. The man behind *Bejeweled* and *Bookworm* is at it again. This time, you're connecting fuses to set off fireworks. If the next issue comes out late, you now know why.




# more spiffy shareware...

**BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION SET**
This no-frills civil engineering sim is way more fun than it should be.



**SAMURAI**
It looks more than a little like a small hex-based *Risk* board, but it's a brilliant little land-grab strategy game for up to four players.



**KYODAI MAHJONGG**
*Kyodai Mahjongg* is basically a fancy-pants cross between *Concentration* and solitaire, with an international flair.

**ZILLIONS OF GAMES 2.0**
A collection of puzzle-based board games, this shareware package is the perfect thing to run in a window that you can easily minimize should your pinhead boss wander by.

**RINGS OF THE MAGI**
While this puzzle game sounds easy—line up rows of colored rings to clear them from the screen—it's brain-bruisingly tough at higher levels.

**STARTERS ORDERS**
This unique sports-strategy hybrid lets you train and race your own Thoroughbreds.

**SNOOD**
Connect three or more heads to make them disappear. Dana wishes getting rid of the *CGW* editors was this fun and easy.

**PURE PINBALL**
The shareware version lets you play Excessive Speed, a glitzy racing-themed table with more ramps than the entire U.S. freeway system.

**BASE GOLF**
*Base Golf* is a bizarre blend of golf and baseball that's more challenging than its cartoony graphics and weird subject matter would imply. We like it because we're better at this than we are at real-life baseball or golf.

YOU CAN FIND LINKS TO THIS SHAREWARE AND MORE AT 101GAMES.COMPUTERGAMING.COM

# from conception to reality

"GBA eat your heart out."
*Official XBOX Magazine July, 2003*

## introducing zodiac™

Witness the birth of true mobile entertainment gear.
It's freedom to go, do and play when you want — where you want.




Tony Hawk's Pro Skater® 4
enhanced especially for Zodiac.

ACTIVISION.

palm
POWERED

Get console-quality gaming with analog controller, integrated triggers and action button array.

Play wirelessly with up to 8 players using built-in Bluetooth.™

Listen to MP3s on stereo speakers or included earbuds.

Watch videos and view your photo library on the big, high-res, backlit color display.

Manage your calendar and contacts. Create Microsoft® Word-compatible documents.

Choose from more than 19,000 Palm OS® applications.

Order your Zodiac today!
Go to www.tapwave.com

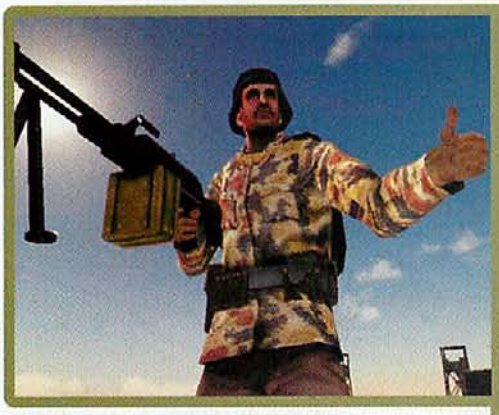
tapwave
go. do. play.

Copyright ©2003 Tapwave, Inc. All rights reserved. Tapwave, the stylized Tapwave logo, Zodiac, and 'go. do. play.' are trademarks of Tapwave, Inc. in the United States and/or other countries. Palm Powered® and Palm OS® are trademarks of PalmSource Inc. Microsoft is a registered trademark of Microsoft, Inc. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4 ©1999-2003 Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Activision and Pro Skater are registered trademarks of Activision, Inc., and its affiliates. Tapwave uses the Bluetooth trademark under express license from the Bluetooth SIG, Inc.

GAME MODS:

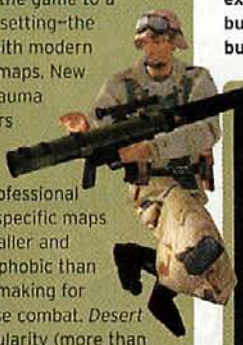
# battlefield 1942

**Just over a year ago, this "little" game arrived on the scene and promptly exploded, with massive 64-player battles that sucked us in well after work was done for the day. A few expansions have renewed our interest in WWII, but some very cool mods have kept us just as busy. Get a load of these:**



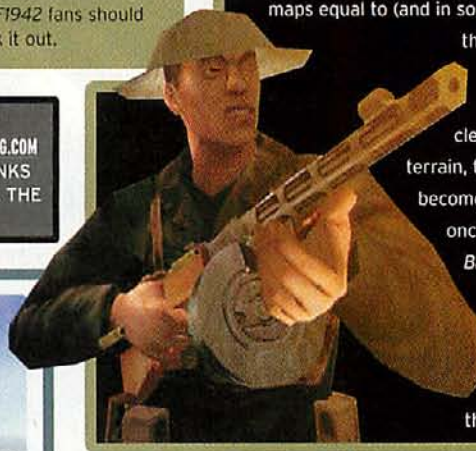
## DESERT COMBAT

**THE MOST POPULAR** *Battlefield 1942* mod to date is a total conversion of the game to a more modern setting—the Middle East—with modern weapons and maps. New York-based Trauma Studios delivers this smart, exciting, and thoroughly professional mod. The *DC*-specific maps tend to be smaller and more claustrophobic than the originals, making for brutally intense combat. *Desert Combat*'s popularity (more than 250,000 downloads so far) is well deserved—all *BF1942* fans should definitely check it out.



## eve of destruction

**EVE OF DESTRUCTION IS THE SECOND MOST POPULAR** *BF1942* mod, transporting the game to a Vietnam War setting—and its fame is well deserved. With maps equal to (and in some cases better than) those in *Desert Combat*, with really clever use of terrain, this mod may become superfluous once EA releases *Battlefield Vietnam*, but for now, it's an excellent alternative to the original game.



## galactic conquest

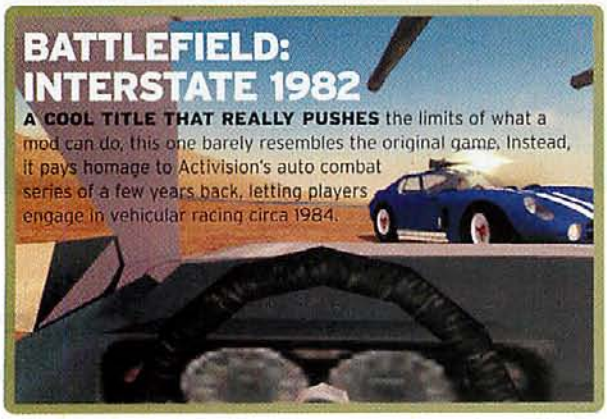
**PROVING STAR WARS GEEKERY** knows no bounds, this mod transports *Battlefield 1942* into a huge Rebels versus Alliance battle in the *Star Wars* universe, complete with AT-STs, blaster rifles, TIE fighters, and more. Sure, Hoth looks like a *BF1942* desert with snow on it, but so what? It's multiplayer *Star Wars* combat! For free! Yet another reason to avoid *Star Wars Galaxies*.



GO TO **101GAMES.COMPUTERGAMING.COM** FOR LINKS TO ALL THE MODS.

## BATTLEFIELD: INTERSTATE 1982

**A COOL TITLE THAT REALLY PUSHES** the limits of what a mod can do, this one barely resembles the original game. Instead, it pays homage to Activision's auto combat series of a few years back, letting players engage in vehicular racing circa 1984.



## bonus battlefield mods...

### ACTION BATTLEFIELD

For those who find the arcadelike action of *Battlefield 1942* "too realistic," *Action Battlefield* makes things more cartoony by amping everything up: jump higher, shoot farther, drive and fly faster, and so on. Lots of fun, but war-sim fans should steer clear.

### BATTLEFIELD: PIRATES

What's up with all the pirate games these days? Is it Johnny Depp's fault? This mod converts *Battlefield 1942* to multiplayer pirate combat. Instead of riding in tanks and tossing grenades, you'll man galleons and rattle a cutlass. Goofy but fun.



### SIEGE

Probably the weirdest mod on this list, so you'll either love it or hate it. *Siege* puts *Battlefield 1942* into the way-back machine and lands it in the medieval era. No, you don't get to take your tanks with you. As the name implies, *Siege* pits invaders, complete with an array of siege weapons, such as battering rams and catapults, against a heavily fortified defending team. Still a work in progress, but promising so far.

### G.I. JOE

We're not geeky enough to admit in public that we watched the cartoon, but we like the idea of a *G.I. Joe* mod. A lot. This mixes real-world weapons with lasers, while vehicles are based on many of the toys. Gameplay, as expected, leans more toward arcade than realism. Hey, it's *G.I. Joe*.

GAME MODS:

# unreal tournament

**Considering the configurable menus, bot options, and modes included in the original, it's obvious *Unreal Tournament* was built for the mod community. Maybe that's why there are so many cool things out there for *UT* and *UT2003*–we had a tough time picking just 10.**



## CHAOS UT 2: EVOLUTION

**THE WEAPONS IN** *Unreal Tournament* have always been cool, but count on the guys from Chaotic Dreams to give *UT* a real boot in the ass. The original *Chaos UT* mod adds a lot of weapon variety, but *CUT2* delivers some very cool weapons and visuals for *UT2003*. Case in point: The Claw2 fires a hopping smiley-faced bomb with a mind of its own.



## conquest marines

**IF YOU CAN'T WAIT** to get your hands on *UT2004* and all its assault-mode-laden goodness, try *Conquest Marines*. In it, you pick sides and classes and even hop into a few vehicles. There's a surprising degree of polish to this mod, and for those craving some squad-based blasting with a sci-fi twist, you can't go wrong.



## FACE-OFF



**"DOWN AND DIRTY** *Counter-Strike* combat with finely tuned graphics" sums up this sweet mod. The few maps we've seen are fairly well designed, the interface is tight, and it's simple to switch weapon sets and loadouts on the fly. Anyone craving fast-paced fighting with modern weaponry had better grab this one quickly.

## JUPITER EFFECT: INFLUX

**DO ALL YOUR GUNDAM** models remain in their shrink-wrapped boxes? Do you own the entire *Macross* run on DVD? If so, *Jupiter Effect: Influx* is the mod to download. Inspired by various mech-anime sources, it allows you to control a transforming mech/jet. If you pay really close attention, you'll notice the style and weaponry are taken straight from the classic Sega game *Virtua On*.

## more unreal mods...



**JUNGLE WARFARE**
Those looking for a modern take on warfare, check out this *UT*-fueled version of *Black Hawk Down*.

**SHATTERED OASIS**
Take an FPS look at the world of *Fallout*.

**SMASH DROIDS**
Battlebots, shmattlebots. Create and crush your own droids here.

**UNREAL BADLANDS**
The original *UT*, done Wild West-style.



**GODZ**
More action game than FPS mod, it puts you in a huge arena full of enhanced warriors.

**TROOPERS: DAWN OF DESTINY**
While it's still a work in progress, this is the mod for all you *Star Wars* dorks.

# Tech Tips

## FIVE WAYS TO SPEED UP WINDOWS XP

**Your system may be slowing games down, but with a few tweaks, you can enhance your machine's performance in less than 10 minutes. Try the following and see if that *UT2003* mod doesn't run faster.**

### 1 TURN OFF VISUAL EFFECTS

Sliding menus and drop shadows slow your system. Right-click on My Computer and select Properties, then choose the Advanced tab. Click the Settings button under Performance, then choose the option "Adjust for best performance."

### 2 DITCH UNNEEDED SERVICES

Go to the Control Panel, choose Administrative Tools, then select Services. Change the following services from an automatic start to a manual start: Automatic Updates, Error Reporting, Indexing, Messenger, Nvidia Driver Helper, Portable Media Serial Number, System Restore, and Task Scheduler.

### 3 MODIFY CPU CYCLES

Most programs are automatically given a Normal priority. To speed up a game, move its priority to a higher level. Start your game and then Alt-Tab out. Run the Task Manager by pressing Ctrl-Alt-Delete, then choose the Processes tab. Right-click on the game program file to select a new priority. Once you close the game, it automatically returns to its default priority.

### 4 LOSE START-UP ITEMS

Choose Run from the Start menu, type "MSCONFIG," then select Startup from the menu that pops up. Uncheck anything unnecessary, such as RealPlayer, Kazaa, any messenger programs, and Microsoft Office.

### 5 PITCH USELESS FILES

Go to the Search function under the Start menu. Search files and folders for all files ending in .bak, .old, and .tmp–these files can all safely be deleted. Then defragment your hard drive to reconsolidate data.

GAME MODS:

# half-life

**The half-life of this game: well more than five years, to say the least. *Half-Life* has spawned numerous quality mods—including the legendary *Counter-Strike* and *Day of Defeat*, both of which went on to become commercial releases. Some of our other favorites include the following:**

## NATURAL SELECTION

**PART OF NATURAL SELECTION'S** popularity is based on the appeal of its aliens-versus-Marines theme, but it's also due to the strategy required by both sides. The Marine commander makes the key strategic decisions and is responsible for the team's welfare. Various alien classes have "evolution" options. The members of each side must fight as a team in order to win.



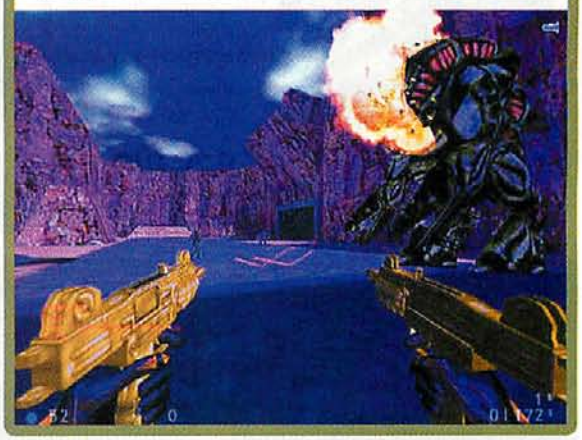
## the specialists

**THIS IS THE MOD FOR MATRIX FANS:** It combines a huge arsenal of weaponry with wild "stunt" moves, like aerial somersaults. You can dive, roll, and do air wheels while blazing away on twin Mac-10s or combine katanas with melee attacks, such as punches and kicks. The weapons and effects are amazingly detailed, with realistic rates of fire, ballistics damage, recoil, etc. All we can say is "Whoa."



## sven co-op

**THIS IS A GREAT MOD** for LAN parties and social gatherings because it's all about playing co-op. There are new weapons, monsters, and a huge variety of cool maps. *Sven Co-op*'s creators do a great job of updating the game and adding new features, and they're already working on *Sven Co-op* for *Half-Life 2*.



## FIREARMS

**FIREARMS IS ALL ABOUT TEAMWORK** and firepower: Thirty meticulously modeled real-world weapons include everything from pistols to the legendary Barret 50-caliber rifle. The basic game is simple: It's blue versus red teams, each trying to achieve various objectives. But the game rewards good players by letting them advance in rank. This is one of the legendary *Half-Life* mods every gamer should try at least once.



## hunky half-life mods...

**EARTH'S SPECIAL FORCES**
A total conversion of the *Dragonball Z* series, *ESF* lets you execute signature moves while jumping, flying, and teleporting around huge maps.

**DESERT CRISIS**
Players choose their stats and fight in a near-future world with a mix of modern and futuristic weapons.

**FRONTLINE FORCE**
A meticulously detailed team-based game with realistic weapons and territory control.

**THE OPERA**
Always wanted to be Chow Yun-Fat in a John Woo movie? This mod gives you your chance.

**BATTLE GROUNDS**
This one will straighten your ramrod: Colonists take on the redcoats in the Revolutionary War. Don't forget to reload, pilgrim.

**PUBLIC ENEMY**
A graphically stunning team-based mod set in a *Blade Runner*-esque world. Unique character development lets you play as a hacker, a sniper, and a dozen others.

**THE WASTES**
Fight for survival in a post-apocalyptic future à la *Fallout*. Choose to play as one of five freaky teams with a wide range of weapons.

**HEART OF EVIL**
A twisted single-player take on *Heart of Darkness*, with mutants, Vietcong, Barney, and a chainsaw.

**BUZZY BOTS**
A big boy's *Toontown*. You choose a robot type and wail on other bots with grenades, lasers, and rockets.

**MONKEY STRIKE**
Monkeys shoot one another with coconut launchers and exploding cats. Eek!

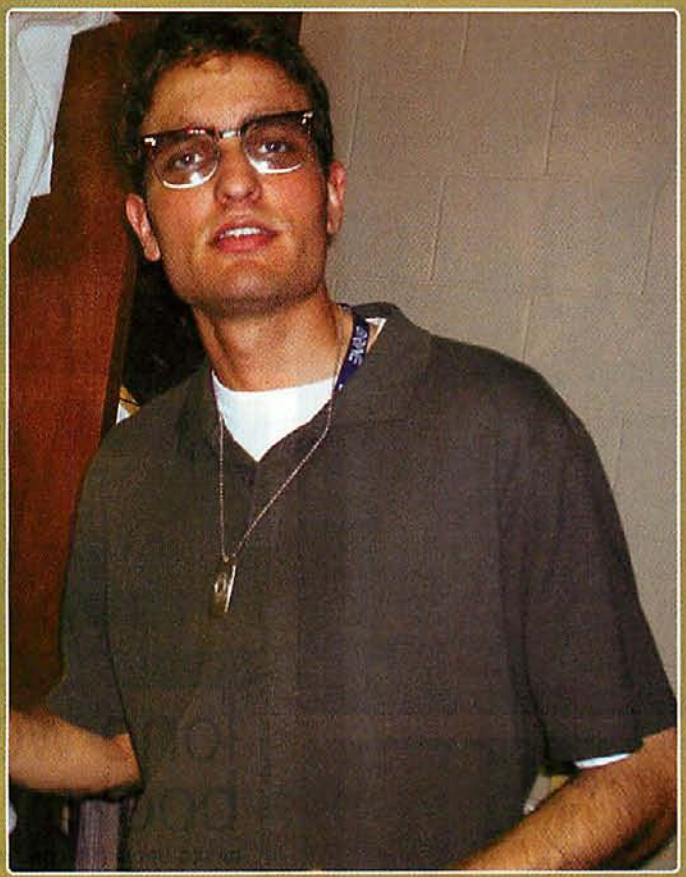
DO NOT WAIT FOR TEAM FORTRESS 2. DOWNLOAD THESE FREE MODS BY GOING TO 101GAMES.COMPUTERGAMING.COM

# the creators of counter-strike

## THE STORY OF TWO GUYS WHO CHANGED THE GAMING WORLD

**There have been countless mods over the years, but nothing comes close to *Counter-Strike*. It's been downloaded millions of times, and today—five years after its release—the average number of simultaneous players is still more than 100,000, which translates to more than 4.5 billion player minutes per month (worldwide) and 88 percent of the online action market, according to Valve Software. Incredibly, it's also sold more than 1.5 million copies in boxed form, even though you can download the same thing for free.**

**Who was responsible for this breakout success? Basically, two guys. Here's what one of them, Jess Cliffe, has to say about it.**



**After working on *Counter-Strike*, Jess Cliffe went from painting houses to being a full-time designer at Valve Software.**

***CGW:*** What were you guys doing before *Counter-Strike*?
**Jess Cliffe:** I was still in high school when we began work on *CS*. I was spending the day painting houses to save money for college and working on *CS* at night with Minh Le. Before *CS*, Minh and I worked together on a mod called *Action Quake 2*.

***CGW:*** Where did you get the idea for *Counter-Strike*?
**Cliffe:** We have both been interested in counterterrorism for a long time now. Minh actually worked on a counterterrorism-based mod for *Quake 1*, called *Navy Seals*. *Action Quake 2* was really the springboard for *CS*, though, since it was a semirealistic game. It's the game that made us want to go all the way with a realistic game.

***CGW:*** How long did it take to develop, and how many people worked with you on it?
**Cliffe:** From the time Valve's SDK came out, the first beta was released in about four months' time. We were very adamant about being one of the very first mods out there, and we were. Initially, there were about four mappers who worked with us, but there have been many mappers since.



**Minh Le**

***CGW:*** Was it a surprise to you that it exploded into this worldwide phenomenon?
**Cliffe:** We couldn't believe it. In those days, it was pretty much unheard of for a punishingly realistic game to become popular. We basically made it as a game that we wanted to play for ourselves and assumed no one else would be interested in it.

***CGW:*** What are your favorite mods for *Half-Life* or any other game?
**Cliffe:** I've been a big *Day of Defeat* fan ever since it came out. The genre makes for a really interesting and intense player experience. Now that I've met and worked with the *Day of Defeat* team, I like the mod even more. There's also a hilarious mod out for *HL*, called *Snow Wars*, which I get a kick out of. Once you get pelted in the face with a snowball, you never go back.

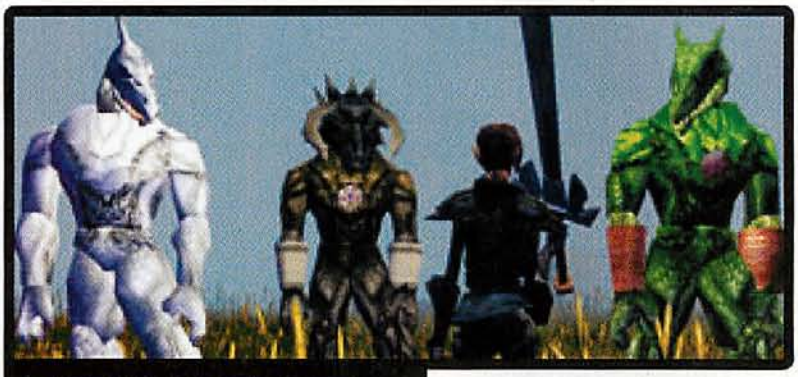
***CGW:*** What are you working on now?
**Cliffe:** We are working with Valve on future-generation products, as well as *Counter-Strike* for the Xbox and *CS: Condition Zero*.

***CGW:*** Would you french-kiss Madonna on live television?
**Cliffe:** I'd prefer a firm embrace.

GAME MODS:

# neverwinter nights

**Dungeon Masters once created adventures with pen, paper, and some oddly shaped dice. Now, it creates worlds like *Neverwinter Nights* from ones and zeroes. Customization is inherent to *NWN*, and thousands of modules and stories have been created by players worldwide. Here are some of our top selections.**



## DREAMCATCHER, VOLUMES 1-4

**FROM WATERDEEP,** the City of Splendors, you and your traveling companion sally forth, unlocking the secrets that lie within your dreams. From the cinematics to the storytelling detail, the *Dreamcatcher* series includes memorable, well-crafted *NWN* mods. Try all four chapters—Skyfall, Oceans Dreams, Pit of Stars, and Evermeet—and check out the precursor series, *Shadowlords*.

## penultima rerolled 1-5

**THE PENULTIMA SERIES BEGINS** by poking fun at Pokémon—after that, everything is fair game. With topics ranging from pop divas to diarrhea, the varied humor comes at you like a zombie horde (which incidentally, you'll also find in *ReRolled*). There are currently five chapters: Starter Pack, Below the Root, Homeland Security, Pastor of Muppets, and The Saving Throw. *ReRolled* is the second campaign; the first five-chapter campaign of *Penultima* is also available online.



## lone wolf, books 1 & 2

**BASED UPON THE LONE WOLF BOOKS,** these modules are about a young man who has the latent abilities of Kai, the Sun God. The two modules currently available are *Test of the Sun* and *Mysteries in the Night*.





## GOOD VS. EVIL

**AH, THE ETERNAL STRUGGLE** between right and wrong, good and evil, toast-buttered-up and toast-buttered-down. This mod twists *Neverwinter Nights* into an action-strategy game in which you command vast armies on one of three battlefields.

FIND ALL THE LINKS TO THESE MODS AT 101GAMES.COMPUTERGAMING.COM

## naughty nwn mods...

**MONTY PYTHON ADVENTURES**
*Dungeons & Dragons* combined with *Monty Python*? It's like peanut butter and chocolate—and you can't say "ni" to that.

**KISS OF FATE**
Maybe it will slip in some tongue, too.

**BONNE KENNING**
Thanaturgy is a serious no-no throughout the lands. Your grandfather was hauled away and hung for practicing it, leaving you hankerin' for revenge.

**TWILIGHT 2.0**
This humble story of a paladin is set to become a trilogy, so after *Twilight 2.0*, we can look forward to *Daybreak XP* and *Teatime Millennium Edition*.

**WITCH'S WAKE**
Isn't it best to let sleeping witches lie? This mod comes from Rob Bartel, lead designer of the *NWN* Live team.

**A HARPER'S TALE**
An inexperienced adventurer quests to become a harper, a specialized class within *NWN* (it's neither a magazine nor a minstrel).

# AGE of MYTHOLOGY
## THE BOARDGAME™

AVAILABLE NOW!

## A GAME OF EPIC PROPORTIONS

*300 Stunning Miniatures*

*150 Wooden Resource Cubes*

*3 Distinct Cultures (Greek, Norse, and Egyptian); Each With Their Own Miniatures, Cards and Gameboard*

*216 Cards Featuring 100 Unique Pieces of Artwork*

*Easy to Learn Rules*

*Deep, Flexible Strategies*

*38 Unique Sculptures*









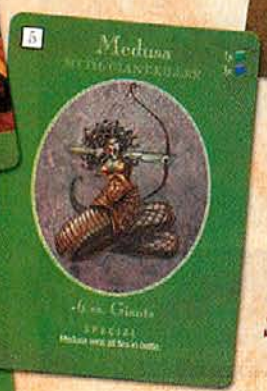






















EAGLE GAMES

Microsoft game studios ENSEMBLE STUDIOS

Age of Mythology, Ensemble Studios, and the Microsoft Game Studios logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

GameStop Wizards of the Coast The Gamer's Quarter CompUSA hastings

www.eaglegames.net

GAME MODS:

# quake III

*Quake III* is a great graphics engine that also happens to be a great game. A number of the following mods dare to do some very different things...at times, even getting a little political.

## bid for power




**THIS MOD WAS** originally based on *Dragonball Z*, but Bandai put the kibosh on that. So *Bid For Power* was sent back to the drawing board, from which it emerged with some original characters drawn in a style similar to *DBZ*'s. You zoom around, raining shots of ki onto your enemies.

## URBAN TERROR



**NOT ALL OF THIS MOD'S MAPS** are in an urban setting, and none are terribly frightening, but *Urban Terror* does offer realistic guns, animations, and blood. A well-worked and polished total conversion release, with a dash of *Counter-Strike* thrown in for good measure.



## SIDRIAL

**SIDRIAL IS AN EARLY** example of machinima (movies made from game engines), though for now, the movie is just a trailer, and the brief single-player game is filled with banal jumping and switch hitting. Nonetheless, the potential of machinima is growing. Interesting side note: *Sidrial* is the product of John Carmack's wife, Katherine Anna Kang.

FIND ALL THESE KILLER MODS AT 101GAMES.COMPUTERGAMING.COM

## wacky quake III mods...



**POLITICAL ARENA**
Who will win the next election? Don't debate. Disintegrate!

**ROCKET ARENA 3**
An oldie but goodie from back in the days of the original *Quake*.

**MR. PANTS' EXCESSIVE OVERKILL**
A name this excessive can only describe the over-the-top explosions of *Mr. Pants*.

**WEAPONS FACTORY ARENA**
Weapons of mass destruction are being continuously churned out–exercise a little "gib" diplomacy.

**AKIMBO**
How many hands does a man have? Last time we checked, two. *Akimbo* lets you use not one, but two weapons at once.

**CATCH THE CHICKEN**
Once you finally catch that chicken, then what? Run from those other chicken-hungry contestants!

**HYBRID**
*Quake* is transmogrified from the three-dimensional first-person shooter we all know and love to a 2D platformer. Not finished yet, but very promising.

**SUPERHEROES III**
Essentially a weapons modifier, this offers each participant various combinations of offensive and defensive superpowers.

# Add-Ons

**The Internet is littered with user-created maps, items, rosters...you name it, someone's made it. Below are some of the best sources of new material for your favorite games.**

**AGE OF MYTHOLOGY**
**aom.heavengames.com**
Scenarios, maps, campaigns, map scripts, and utilities–all available for free.

**COMBAT MISSION 2**
**www.combatmission.com**
Scenarios organized by size and historical accuracy, plus unit and sound mods.

**HIGH HEAT**
**www.highheat2004.net**
Current rosters, historical lineups, dream teams–find 'em all here.

**MAX PAYNE**
**www.fileplanet.com/files/80000.85302.shtml**
Wash out the foul taste of *Enter the Matrix* with this slick total conversion for *Max Payne*.

**RED ALERT 2**
**www.cncgames.com**
Maps, mods, and more are yours for the taking.

**ROLLERCOASTER TYCOON 2**
**www.rollercoastertycoon2.com**
The official website supports an exchange space for user-created rides and scenarios.

**THE SIMS**
**www.thesimsresource.com**
Download zillions of heads, skins, and objects at this compendium of all things *Sims*.

**SYSTEM SHOCK 2**
**perso.wanadoo.fr/etienne.aubert/sshock/sshock_rebirth.htm**
Download this graphics upgrade to enjoy *SS2* all over.

**WARCRAFT III**
**www.warcraftiii.net**
A fansite with maps and mods, organized by type of map and number of players.

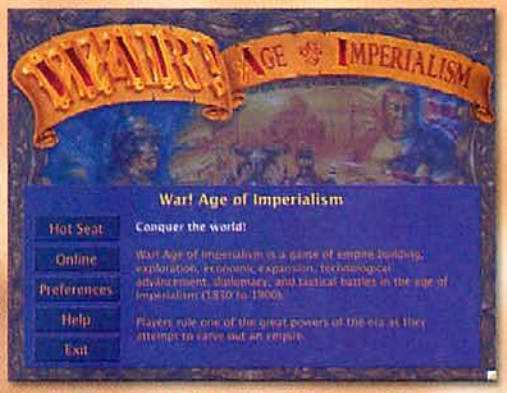
# WAR! AGE of IMPERIALISM

## The Ultimate Strategy Boardgame Is Now Available On Your PC!



*Stunning antique map hand-painted by Paul E. Niemeyer*

War! Is a game of empire building, exploration, economic expansion, technological advancement, diplomacy, and tactical battles in the age of Imperialism (1830 – 1900). You rule one of the great powers of the era as they attempt to carve out an empire. Should you build up your army or your economy? Negotiate or attack? Spend on research or a new fort to protect the frontier?




*Tough Artificial Intelligence makes every game a challenge*

**Praise for the Boardgame**

"... the ultimate face to face multiplayer hardware for gamers." - *Computer Games Magazine*

"... 5 out of 5. We had to spank the other monkeys to keep them away." - *Game Monkeys.com*

"... another winner from Eagle Games." - *Gamer's Pulse*



*Raise armies of Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, and Leaders to protect what's yours and to take what isn't*

### FEATURES

- *Fast, Fun Turn-Based Gameplay*
- *New map sections with North and South America*
- *Play any time against the computer or up to 7 human players*
- *Solo play against a relentless artificial intelligence*
- *Internet play: Live multiplayer online or via e-mail*

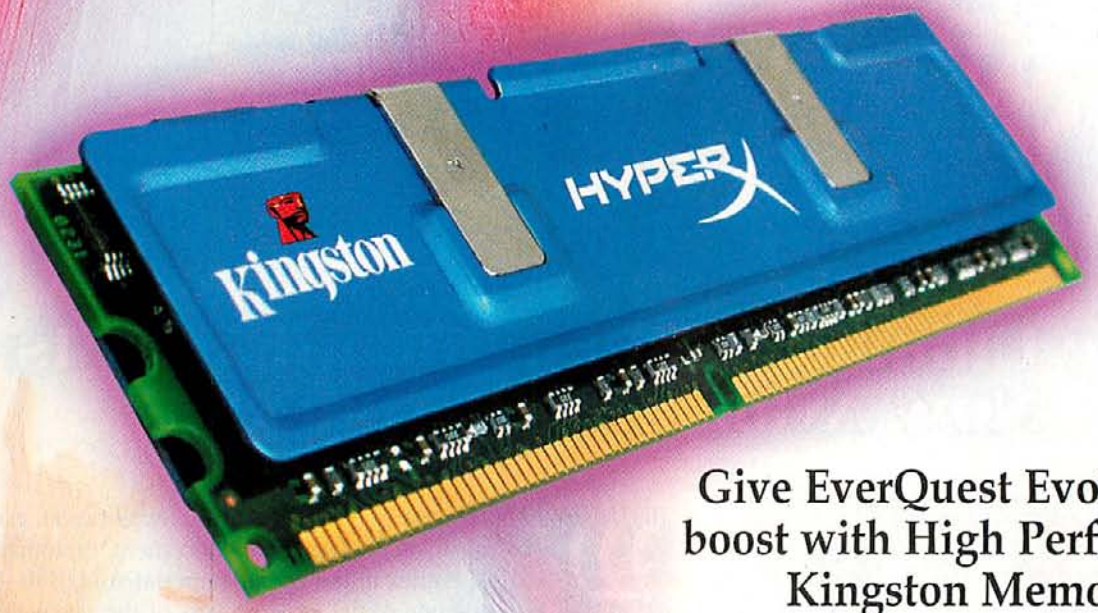
EAGLE GAMES

DONOHOE DIGITAL

**Available at these and other fine retailers**

GameStop

www.eaglegames.net




# Give EverQuest Evolution a boost with High Performance Kingston Memory!

Kingston is offering huge savings of up to 40% off MSRP. Look inside your EverQuest Evolution box to get the coupon.

*Get your memory at*
*www.kingston.com/boost*

Kingston TECHNOLOGY

*HyperX memory will not operate in all systems. Please check your system requirements for the memory specifications compatible with your system.




Includes:

EverQuest Classic,

The Ruins of Kunark expansion,

The Scars of Velious expansion,

The Shadows of Luclin expansion,

The Planes of Power expansion and

The Legacy of Ykesha expansion.

**Available Now!**

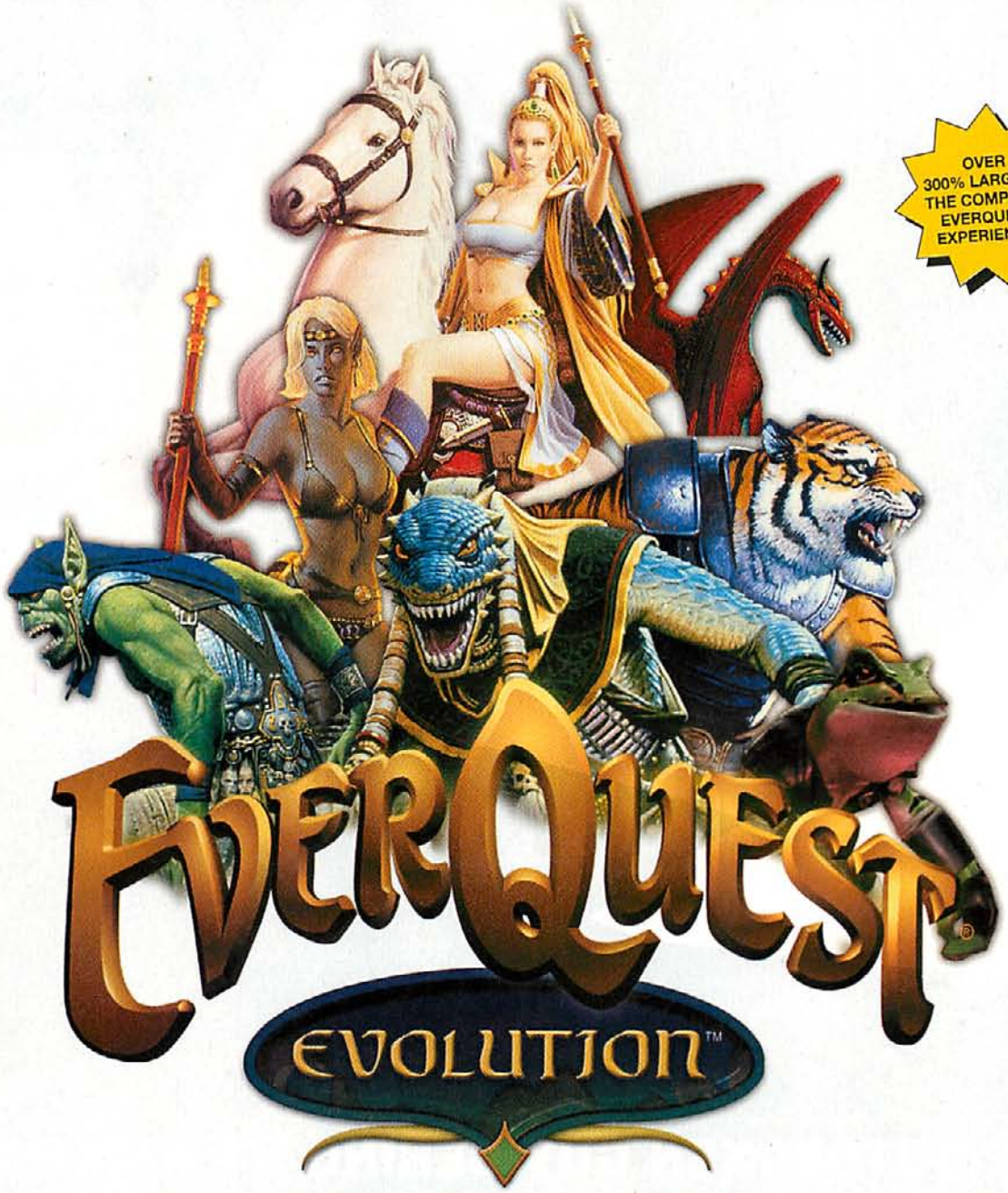






©2003 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. EverQuest, The Scars of Velious and The Ruins of Kunark are registered trademarks and The Shadows of Luclin, The Planes of Power, The Legacy of Ykesha and Evolution are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. SOE and the SOE logo are registered trademarks of Sony Online Entertainment Inc. Kingston and HyperX are registered trademarks of Kingston Technology Company, Inc.The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks are properties of their respective owners. All rights reserved.

# EXPERIENCE THE WORLD'S #1 ONLINE MULTIPLAYER ADVENTURE




## The definitive collection of the ultimate online multiplayer experience is here.

The vibrant world of EverQuest awaits you, and there has never been a better time to experience it. Introducing EverQuest Evolution featuring all five EverQuest expansion packs, plus the original EverQuest. Discover this expansive universe with the help of literally thousands of fellow players logged into the game world right now.

So, don your armor and gird your sword! Commit your spells to memory and grab your wizard's staff! The mighty world of EverQuest is ready for you. Are you ready for EverQuest? Now is the time to find out!

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
BLOOD & GORE
VIOLENCE
SUGGESTIVE THEMES

**Includes 300% increase in explorable zones from original version

www.everquest.com

PC CD ROM

SOE SONY ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT



## THE OUTSPOKEN GUY BEHIND UT AND HOW HIS

# KEEPIN' I




NEW GAME WILL KICK YOUR ASS BY GEORGE JONES

# UNREAL

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL BACK





The world according to Cliffy B: Rock music? It's been corny and whiny for the last decade. "Pearl Jam ruined it for everyone," he says. What about cursing? "Everybody knows that f--- is the new comma!" How do you break into game design? "Get off your ass and build a game! You can't get a job as a game designer by just sitting around thinking about it all day."

Which brings us to *Unreal Tournament*. Originally, it was supposed to be a small multiplayer add-on pack to *Unreal*, but it turned into something more, something great. Cliff Bleszinski and company—all hardcore deathmatchers—found a highly entertaining groove that combined hyperactive play speeds, innovative weapons, and a fresh, new look at multiplayer game types.

## We surrender

We lost countless nights to Assault matches before declaring *Unreal Tournament* Game of the Year for 1999. It had toppled the House of *Quake*. "*UT* simply has more [than *Quake III: Arena*]: more gameplay...more interesting levels, and way more colors," we said back in March 2000. But something happened. *Unreal Tournament 2003* came out in all its graphically polished glory, just without an Assault mode. That oversight is about to be corrected—big time. "We surprised a lot of people with the original [*Unreal Tournament*]," Bleszinski explains. "And we're hoping to do the same with *Unreal Tournament 2004*."

They have. *UT2004*'s astonishing graphical quality in a variety of environments—from forest to fast-moving train to snow—are surpassed only by the hypercharged gameplay. (The inclusion of a software renderer means that even fast PCs with low-end videocards can play.)

**ONSLAUGHT'S HYPER PACE WILL**

The most promising addition is Onslaught, a new game type that, per Bleszinski, borrows from *Battlefield 1942* and *PlanetSide*. In this open-ended, more tactical variation of Capture the Flag, two teams of up to 16 players compete to destroy the other's base by fighting over a sequence of access points. Because teams can attack the enemy base only by first controlling the string of access points that directly connects to enemy HQ, Onslaught matches consist of a constant series of tense, back-and-forth skirmishes as well as the type of reactive, on-the-fly strategizing that the more massively multiplayer games embrace.

The difference between *UT2004* and other multiplayer matches, however, is speed. Onslaught's *UT*-style, hyperrelentless pace will have gamers initially gasping for air. "If you're used to playing *Counter-Strike*," Bleszinski chuckles wickedly, "it'll take a while to get used to this."

As teams gain control over map points, players are rewarded with a slew of single- and multiple-occupant





Wage space war on the Mothership map...







...so that you can blow up the generator inside.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL BACA

vehicles, including jeeps, tanks, fighters, bombers, and even a massive, mobile assault vehicle known as the Leviathan. Thankfully, controlling the air- and ground-based vehicles in the game—another new addition to the *UT* universe—won't take much getting used to because the control schemes for each are intuitive and accessible. "We knew we wanted to do vehicles," Bleszinski explains, "but the great thing is that it still feels like *Unreal Tournament*."

## HAVE GAMERS GASPING FOR AIR.

Gamers wanting more structure and narrative in their gaming will be ecstatic with the much-improved Assault, which takes objective-based multiplayer levels to realms rarely seen—like outer space.

In the Mothership map, which simulates a poignant moment in the *Unreal* universe's history and will likely catapult *UT2004* into Action Game of the Year territory, gamers board individual space fighters and attack (or defend) the massive mothership's shields and defenses before landing. After this harrowing sequence, gamers fight their way through a series of corridors, where they can even attempt to disable the ship's gravity generator before attempting to destroy the ship's core.

Similarly enjoyable is Robot Factory, another supercharged Assault map. One group of gamers mounts up in heavy tanks and attempts to destroy an enemy robot factory defended by a massive ion cannon capable of inflicting catastrophic damage on groups of enemy units.

### Bots with some personality

One feature *UT* builds upon in this version is the presence of highly sophisticated A.I. bots, which allow gamers to play *UT2004* by themselves. In turbo-charging the single-player experience, Epic is blurring the lines between A.I. and human in ways that very few games have.

Much like the one in the original *UT* and the 2003 edition, *UT2004*'s single-player mode challenges players with battling their way through a series of challenges and game types. Play begins with qualifying deathmatch rounds, in



This massive gun can take out a whole squad at once.







The Jeep has two gunner seats for combo hits.

**"IF MY DAD HADN'T DIED, I PROBABLY WOULD HAVE HAD TO BECOME AN ACCOUNTANT OR SOMETHING."**

which gamers prove themselves to corporate sponsors. After that, it's time for the players to draft a team and fight against competitors in deathmatch modein order to prove themselves worthy of command. From there, they engage in a series of contests against increasingly talented opponents. Much like before, success in one game type opens up access to other game types.

Successful *UT2004* captains will have to manage their roster in a style that feels more like *Madden 2004* than a 3D shooter. Salary caps, player injuries, and team rivalries must be dealt with. Due to play-balancing concerns, Onslaught is not part of the single-player game.

Additionally, gamers will be able to use voice commands via headset or PC mic to direct their bots, a single-player advance both Bleszinski and lead programmer Steven Polge believe will have tremendous future potential. Each A.I. team member has a call sign, so players will be able to say "Charlie, cover me" and see results. All game types found in *UT2003* will be included in the *UT2004* arsenal.

## They zig, you zag

"I've always viewed *Unreal* as counterprogramming," says Bleszinski, who is fortunate to have found a career that appreciates individualism. He is most proud that *UT* has been able to successfully differentiate itself in a hypercrowded genre.

Ironically, life might have turned out differently for the lifelong gamer if his father hadn't unexpectedly died when he was 15. "I probably would have had to go to college and become an accountant or something," he speculates. Instead, he moved to Ontario, California, where he almost immediately began working on games. "In true Catholic fashion," he laughs, "I carry oodles of guilt about the fact that I have this great job and success because my dad smoked and ate horribly and keeled over at age 47."





Open up and say "Aaaaaah..."

Jay Wilbur, former Id Software CEO and now Epic Games' strategic and spiritual advisor, has overseen the development of a few talented game designers in his career and is pleased with Cliffy's growth. "I've had the pleasure to see Cliff grow into a talented, mature game-development manager. He might argue that he is still just a game designer, but his role at Epic has expanded well beyond that."

Game-development management must be in Bleszinski's blood. In 1994, way before the red-tinted hair and the 2001 Dodge Viper RT/10, he partnered with Dutch programmer Arjan Brusee to program and developed *Jazz Jackrabbit*, an entertaining shareware platform game that won Epic several Shareware of the Year awards.

Much of the reason his role has expanded is Bleszinski's charisma, which stems from a willingness to speak sincerely, a rarity in a business that likes its personalities controversy-free. Surprisingly, he catches no flak, which seems to suggest that, after a few abortive attempts, gaming may finally be ready to accept an outspoken personality. But for all his big talk, Bleszinski knows that all the fame, fortune, and success boils down to one thing: game design. "When Jay Wilbur started working with us," he says, "he told me that level design is where the rubber hits the road. That's absolutely true, and I take that to heart."

## Cliffy B's Favorite UT2003 Mods

As we go to press, Epic is helping would-be designers get in the game with a million-dollar "Make Something Unreal" level-design contest. We've got plenty of mods in this month's 101 Free Games feature, but here's what Cliffy is currently into.



**DEATHBALL**
A mix of soccer, football, handball, and war, Deathball is a 5-on-5 first-person sports game.

**FACE-OFF**
Modern combat, realistic weapons, and the *UT2003* engine? Sounds like a win to us.

**AIR BUCCANEERS**
A compelling combination of graceful air ballet, fierce pirate action, and 3D tactical maneuvering. Gar!

**ALIENS FOR UT2003**
Enough said.

**JUNGLE WARFARE**
It's *Counter-Strike* in the jungle! Marines and guerrillas square off amidst lush foliage and tropical humidity.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL BACK

# Gothic II™

"Watch out Blizzard, Bioware and Black Isle! The competition is about to heat up with the release of this surprisingly remarkable sequel."
–*PC Gaming World*

"...it is the most captivating game I have played lately."
– *Computer Games*

See the world of *Gothic II* in motion at **www.gothic2.com**






RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.

JoWooD Productions

PIRANHA

Gothic II © 2003 by Pluto 13 GmbH. Published by JoWooD Productions Software AG, Technologiepark 4a, A-8786 Rottenman, Austria. Distributed by Atari. All rights reserved. All other Trademarks are the property of their respective owners. The Ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

ATARI

# ON-SALE NOW

## LOOK FOR OUR SPECIAL ISSUES ON NEWSSTANDS EVERYWHERE THIS FALL!




From the same people who bring you Electronic Gaming Monthly, GameNOW, Computer Gaming World, Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine, Xbox Nation and GMR. These special magazines can be found only on newsstands or through back order.

Look for these magazines at Borders, Barnes and Noble, Waldenbooks, B. Dalton, Babbages, GameStop, Funcoland, Walmart, Kmart, Target, Walgreens, CVS, Kroger and Safeway.




**EGM CodeBook #1**
On-Sale NOW!

**Pocket Games #13**
On-Sale September 16, 2003

**EGM's Unofficial GameCube and GameBoy Advance Guide 2003**
On-Sale November 4, 2003

**EGM Holiday Buyer's Guide 2004**
On-Sale November 18, 2003

**EGM Game Guide #3**
On-Sale December 2, 2003

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY · PlayStation · COMPUTER GAMING WORLD · GAMENOW · GMR · POCKET games · XBN XBOX NATION

# IS YOUR CODEBOOK LIBRARY COMPLETE?

## DON'T MISS OUT ON THESE SPECIAL ISSUES FROM THE EDITORS OF ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY, COMPUTER GAMING WORLD, GAMENOW, OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE, GMR, AND XBOX NATION.




○ Pocket Games Summer 2000 $12.00




○ Pocket Games Fall 2000 $12.00




○ Pocket Games Summer 2001 $12.00




○ Pocket Games 7 Fall/Winter 2001 $12.00




○ Pocket Games 8 Spring 2002 $12.00




○ Pocket Games 9 Summer 2002 $12.00




○ Pocket Games 10 Fall/Winter 2002 $12.00




○ Pocket Games 11 Spring 2003 $12.00




○ Pocket Games 12 Summer 2003 $12.00




○ EGM Guides #1: Super Mario Sunshine $12.00




○ EGM Guides #2: GTA: Vice City $12.00




○ EGM CodeBook #1: 2003 $12.00

**Order these back issues to make sure that you have a complete library of the most valuable tricks, cheats, and codes for all the top games on your console.**

**HOW TO ORDER:**
Simply check off which magazines you want and send in the order form (photocopies accepted) along with a check made payable to Ziff Davis Media, for the amount indicated for each magazine plus shipping and handling—add $3 for U.S., $3 for Canada and $5 for foreign orders—in U.S. funds only for each magazine. Orders should be mailed to:

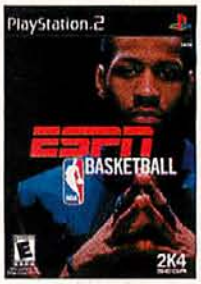
Back Issues
1411 Opus Place, Ste. 340
Downers Grove, IL 60515

Price and availability subject to change without notice.

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA GAME GROUP

If you bought all these games, it would cost about **$400.**





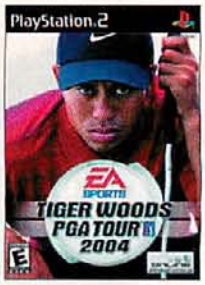


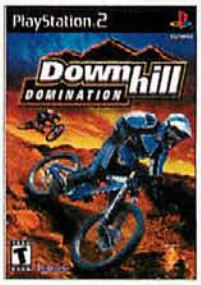
**Why not try them all first in the Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine for less than $10?**



















**PLAYABLE DEMOS**

- KILL SWITCH
- CHAOS LEGION
- PITFALL HARRY
- CY GIRLS
- ESPN NBA BASKETBALL
- TAK & THE POWER OF JUJU
- TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004
- DOWNHILL DOMINATION
- PRINCE OF PERSIA

**COOL MOVES**

- PRIMAL
- AMPLITUDE
- XENOSAGA
- HULK
- APE ESCAPE 2

**DOWNLOADS**

- GUNGRAVE
- WRECKLESS

**VIDEOS**

- JAK II
- SPY HUNTER 2
- FINAL FANTASY X-2
- LEGACY OF KAIN
- MISSION IMPOSSIBLE (COMMERCIAL)

**INSIDE THE GAME**

- FINAL FANTASY X-2 UNVEILED AT E3

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA GAME GROUP

**LOOK FOR DISK 74 IN THE NOVEMBER 2003 ISSUE OF OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE ON SALE NOW!**

DISC 74 PRESENTED BY OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE AND PLAYSTATION UNDERGROUND

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

# Reviews

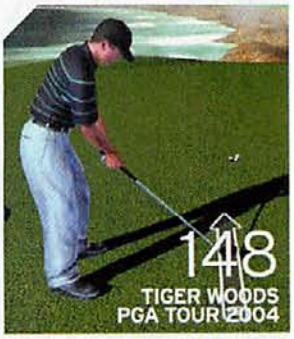
**We love games, we hate games** Edited by Robert Coffey




HALO 124



134 REPUBLIC: THE REVOLUTION



148 TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004

**They'd better dress up these RTS games in black lace garter belts and stiletto heels to get us stoked about them.**

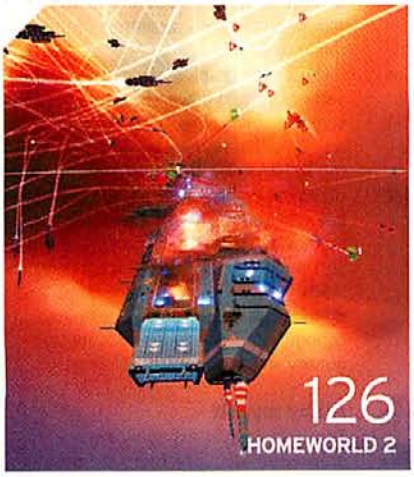
WARRIOR KINGS: BATTLES 128



144 TONY HAWK PRO SKATER 4



138 BATTLEFIELD 1942: SECRET WEAPONS OF WORLD WAR II



126 HOMEWORLD 2

## INSIDE


124 Halo
126 Homeworld 2
128 Warrior Kings: Battles
129 Runaway: A Road Adventure
130 Etherlords II
131 Mistmare
134 Republic: The Revolution
136 Cold Zero: No Mercy
138 Battlefield 1942: Secret Weapons of World War II
140 Medal of Honor: Allied Assault–Breakthrough
140 Revisionist History: America's Army
142 Hoyle Majestic Chess
142 Heaven & Hell
144 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
144 AquaNox 2: Revelation
148 Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004




Horrendous, eviscerating killers coming my way.

# Halo

Where've you been all this time? BY JOHNNY LIU

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT
DEVELOPER: BUNGIE/GEARBOX
GENRE: FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER ESRB RATING: MATURE; BLOOD AND GORE, VIOLENCE PRICE: $49.99
REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM III 733, 128MB RAM, 1.3GB HARD DRIVE SPACE, 32MB 3D CARD RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM 4 800, 256MB RAM, 128MB 3D CARD
MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN, INTERNET (2-16 PLAYERS)

The wait has been long, but the promises made long ago have finally been kept. Sadly, the promises of yesteryear don't quite add up to excitement today—the release of *Halo* for PC is hardly the event it could have, should have been.

Everything from the Xbox version has been faithfully ported here, including the story: A collective of religiously fanatical aliens, the Covenant, has pursued a human battleship to the edges of the galaxy. Forced to land on a strange ring-shaped world, the humans make their final stand. Fortunately, mankind has one last ace up its sleeve: soldier and warrior the Master Chief.

## Smack that grunt up

All the things that made *Halo* fun in the first place are here. From the clever mechanics of a two-gun swap system to the unparalleled three-way attack, the combat in *Halo* is hard to beat. The trifecta of bullets, bombs, and bumping provides a different approach for every moment of danger. Gathering of enemies in the distance? Lob a bomb. A grunt sleeping on the job? Bash him upside the head.

Die-hard PC gamers swear by their WASD and mouse controls, but among console first-person shooters, *Halo* does have the dual-stick controls down. Still, while I miss the heft and vibration of the Xbox controller, it's a welcome relief to return to the head-shot accuracy that only the mouse can deliver. And a melee attack that's bound to a mouse's side button works perfectly.

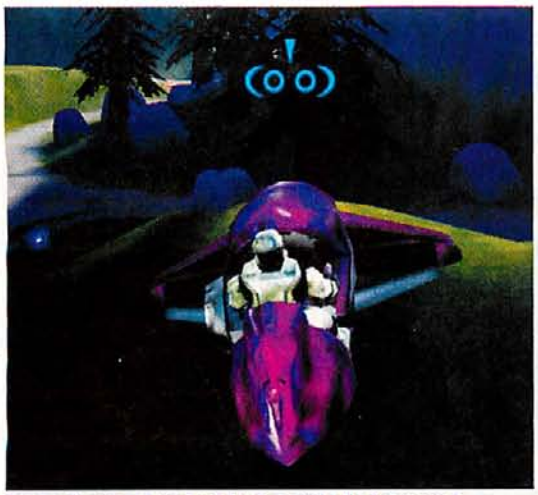
Weapons like the plasma gun feel slightly stronger on the PC, with a slightly longer reload, but that's a relative measure—being able to make more-accurate head shots with the mouse might be the reason a weapon feels stronger. Turnaround times via the mouse seem quicker, resulting in easier donuts for the Warthog vehicle. That's great for whipping around for quick road kills, but for traditional point-to-point to driving, the mouse feels floaty. Still, the mouse and keyboard controls pretty much rule.

Not so the graphics. Even with all the settings turned down, the game has some visual hiccups. What looks good on a television hasn't scaled so gracefully to the PC. And the whole visual feel comes off as dated, especially since there have been no updates to the character models. While the epic soundtrack is as stirring as ever, sound effects haven't made the transition from the console quite as gracefully—on one computer configuration, the sounds of constant gunfire were continually cut short.

**_Halo_'s focus has always been on firepower, but that's no excuse for repetitive stages.**

## All by myself

The single-player experience is one drawn-out ride. Sure, there are cool



Commandeering an alien vehicle for a little fly-by shooting.



Because every game has to have a sniping weapon....



NPC A.I. is good, with squadmates jumping into your Warthog to help fight the bad guys.



There may be more support troops, but that doesn't mean they'll survive the bigger battles.

moments like smoking your way through unending tides of a flood or tearing across a winter plain in the scorpion tank, crushing Covenant members beneath your treads. Yet for each of those points, there are innumerable times when you wonder, "Haven't I played this before?"—and I don't mean Xbox déjà vu. Plain and simple, the single-player level design has always been *Halo*'s greatest weakness. Whatever aliens built that infernal ring could really use a better architect and an interior decorator. *Halo*'s focus has always been firepower over exploration, but that's no excuse for repetitive stages with a lazy copy/paste mentality to reusing environments.

The PC single-player game does have some advantages: More support troops seem to be plugged in at various points, game saves can be done from any checkpoint, and chapter load times have been significantly reduced. While beneficial, these adjustments don't significantly change the single-player experience and do little to make up for the lack of a real human teammate. And that's *Halo*'s biggest sin.

## All by myself, part deux

Inexplicably, the co-op mode has been completely scratched. A human compadre in the thick of things really kept the Xbox game interesting during *Halo*'s more prolonged stages. Even if there was no way to sync the necessary timing across the Internet, the developers could at least have left a LAN co-op option in. The omission is inexcusable.

Within multiplayer, the additions of the alternate Warthog (now with a rocket cannon) and the flying Banshee are appreciated, along with two new weapons, the flame thrower and fuel rod gun. Yet these things alone don't rewrite the face of multiplayer gaming. The LAN and Internet play work adequately enough and the new stages fit the feel of *Halo*, but the absence of bots could use attention.

Even when I look at the game through new eyes, ignoring the weekly hours I ritually offered my Xbox, *Halo* can't compete against the latest and greatest ilk of PC first-person shooters. The multiplayer and mechanics of combat are finely tuned, but aren't enough to lift *Halo* past its dated single-player, lack of graphical upgrades, and only competent performance.

If this had come out when it was first expected, it would have been a godsend. Now it's like a delayed present. "That's great Dad, but I asked for that toy truck three years ago. Now I want a pony."

**VERDICT** ★★★★½

Lost in translation.



It may not play better, but *Homeworld 2* sure looks better.

INSET: Laying in waypoints from the sensor view.

# Homeworld 2

One small step for an RTS **BY TOM CHICK**

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: **SIERRA**
DEVELOPER: **RELIC ENTERTAINMENT**
GENRE: **RTS**
ESRB RATING: **TEEN; VIOLENCE**
PRICE: **$44.99**
REQUIREMENTS: **PENTIUM III 833, 256MB RAM, 1.6GB HARD DRIVE SPACE, 32MB 3D CARD**
RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: **PENTIUM 4 800, 512MB RAM, 128MB 3D CARD**
MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: **LAN, INTERNET (2-6 PLAYERS)**

*Homeworld 2* is a sort of misguided reworking of *Homeworld*, halfway between a rehash and a remodeling job, but with the interesting bits sanded off. The vividly distinct sides added in the *Cataclysm* expansion are gone, the clean interface is now a mess, and much of the strategy has been methodically cut out. What you get in exchange for all this is better graphics.

Of course, if you're not familiar with Relic's original *Homeworld* and Barking Dog's *Cataclysm* expansion, you might not notice any of this. Instead, you'll be introduced to an RTS in true three-dimensional space in which you maneuver fleets of spacecraft into epic battles and watch from wherever you want. *Homeworld*'s appeal is only partly the thrill of building units and sending them into battle; the real hook here is that you can play movie director and enjoy the spectacle from any angle or zoom. And it looks fantastic. Swarms of fighters zip along the tips of colored trails, midsized frigates trundle around and pick off their targets, and huge, pokey capital ships drift in from behind to mop up. The detail and special effects have been punched up as high as modern hardware can bear—and then some (framerates suffer in bigger battles). Visually, *Homeworld 2* is one of the most rewarding real-time strategy games you can play.

There are two sides here, with minor differences. Basically, the good guys get ion beams and a shield ship, and the bad guys get pointy ships that fire missiles and they can build hyperspace gates. But there's nothing here like the clever Beast race introduced in *Cataclysm*, much less the unique ship capabilities and tech advances. With so few ship classes, the simplified resource model, and almost no terrain in space, there isn't much breadth to *Homeworld 2*.

## Sucked into a black hole

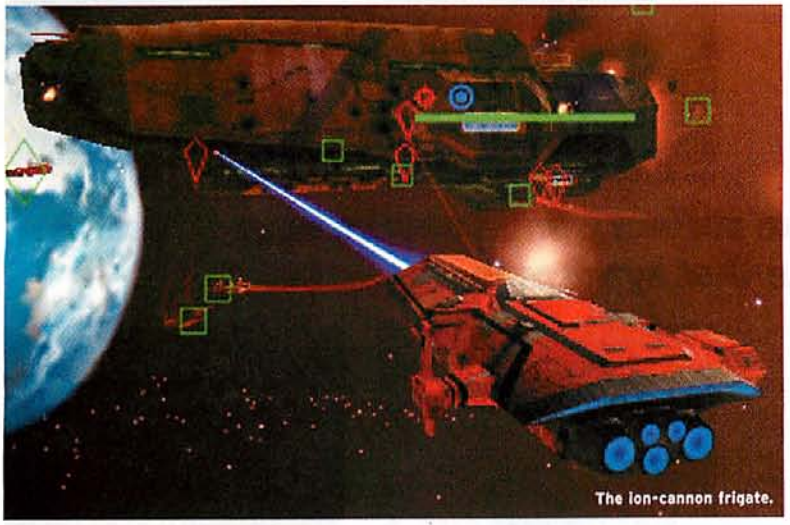
One of the most noticeable changes is the bigger and more conventional interface, with panels crowded around the edges of the screen. The previous games had a minimal interface that gave you the sense of floating in space. Now you're peering at little ships through a computer monitor. The new untethered viewing system makes camera control more confusing. Instead of selecting ships from a text list, you have to memorize silhouettes on big, fat buttons. Over each ship's health bar are informative icons that only appear at certain zoom levels. Fighters and corvettes are now squadrons instead of individual units, which makes everything look busier without adding much functionality. There's no easy way to distinguish



The massive battle cruiser counters, well, almost everything.


Destroyers to the rescue.


Missile frigates doing their job.


The ion-cannon frigate.


Bombers on a, you guessed it, bombing run.

between multiple building facilities. What happened to the streamlined elegance of *Homeworld*'s old interface?

The old system of formations is gone, replaced with a muddled system of strike groups, control groups, and behavior settings. Experience and upgrades for specific ships are gone, giving them all a disposable feel in which one ship is like every other ship of its kind. The end result is that you're encouraged to just build your ships and throw them together into a computer-controlled mob that can behave unpredictably. *Homeworld 2* puts a new emphasis on building specific counterunits, so your choice of what units to build is more important than what you do with them. You're more of a shipyard administrator than an admiral.

For instance, bombers kill destroyers, fighters kill bombers, gunships kill fighters, frigates kill gunships, and destroyers kill frigates. There are enough variations that you need a flow chart to figure it all out. And the rules are dramatic enough that without playing by the flow chart, you're going to lose. In fact, many of the single-player missions are like puzzles in which you have to figure out the right combination to counter enemy ships.

### Dead space

The ships move so quickly, they're so disposable, and the maps are so small that hyperspace travel, cloaking, and disabling/capturing—all important elements of the previous games—take a backseat to just building the right guns and slugging it out. There are other important elements of the original *Homeworld* now missing: support modules for unit limits, spending time instead of money for research, and being able to build multiple ships simultaneously at a production facility. These might seem like minor nits, but they have a serious impact on the way the game plays. There is now a hard limit on how many ships of each class you can have, you're forced to spend money to buy research from a dull tech tree, and each production facility can only build one ship at a time, whether it's a costly battle cruiser or a cheap fighter. These changes suck a lot of variety from gameplay, discouraging bold strategies and shunting players into homogenous approaches with only minor tweaks.

**Halfway between a rehash and a remodeling job, but with the interesting bits sanded off.**

There's still a decent and slightly awkward game here. But as a sequel, *Homeworld 2* is an upgrade for the graphics and a step backward for the gameplay. Perhaps *Homeworld 0.9* would have been a more fitting title.

**VERDICT** ★★½☆☆

It's no *Cataclysm*—it's not even *Homeworld*.

# Warrior Kings: Battles

Good game, but good god, yet another RTS title BY MARK ASHER

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: STRATEGY FIRST
DEVELOPER: BLACK CACTUS
GENRE: REAL-TIME STRATEGY
ESRB RATING: TEEN; BLOOD, VIOLENCE PRICE: $39.99
REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM III 733, 128MB RAM, 800MB HARD DRIVE SPACE
RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM III 1GHZ, 256MB RAM, 1GB HARD DRIVE SPACE, 32MB 3D CARD
MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: INTERNET, LAN (2-8 PLAYERS)

*Warrior Kings: Battles*, the sequel to *Warrior Kings*, does a lot of things right and only a few things wrong. So why don't I like it more? Maybe it's the constant wrestling with the camera. Maybe it's the uninspired art direction. Maybe it's just that after 100 of these RTS games, it's difficult to get excited about the 101st. The game industry has foisted dozens upon dozens of these on us and someone needs to tell these bean counters that the honeymoon's over. They need to dress up these RTS games in black lace stockings, a garter belt, and stiletto heels to get us stoked about fooling around with them. Unfortunately, *Warrior Kings: Battles* comes with curlers in its hair.

There's much to like about *Warrior Kings: Battles*, which is set in a fantasy world that looks exactly like medieval Europe, right down to the campaign map. Black Cactus, the developer, has focused on improving a couple aspects of the RTS experience and has done a good job. The combat in *Warrior Kings: Battles* is excellent. You can put your units in formations to get defensive or offensive bonuses, you can leverage the advantage of different unit types to get favorable matchups (heavy infantry beats heavy calvary), and you can take advantage of terrain elevation. The downside is that being a good general requires your attention, and you have cities to manage—imagine *Medieval: Total War* if you had to switch back and forth between the battlefield and peasants chopping wood. *Warrior Kings: Battles* puts that kind of pressure on your attention.



Blue Man Group getting ready to take on some yellowbellies.

**Mostly, the game suffers from a severe case of the been-there-done-that syndrome.**



The campaign map of Orbis, which for some reason looks a lot like Europe.



This spider demon is one of the special fantasy units in the game.



You can pull the camera out for a wider view—too bad you can't control it all that well.

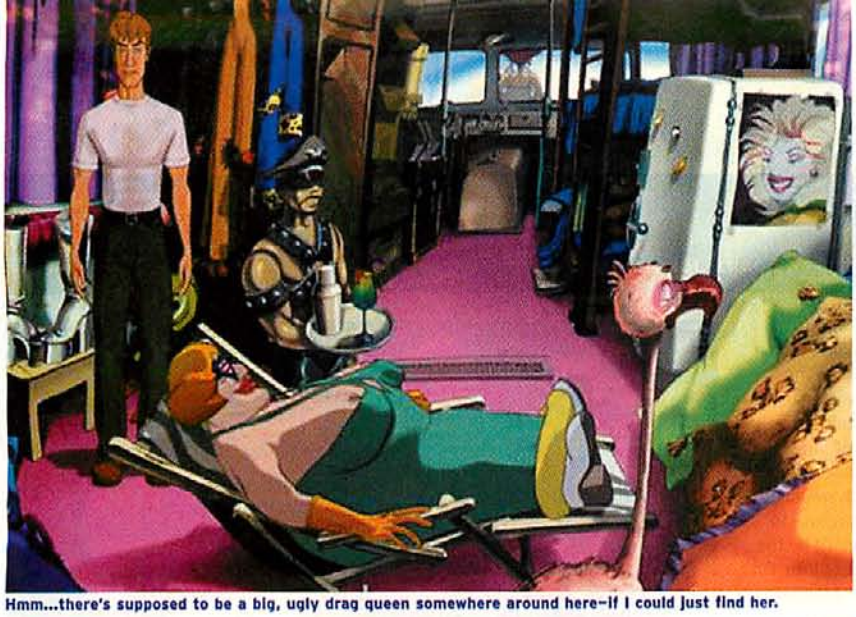
The campaign is also more interesting than the usual assortment of precooked scenarios strung together. The campaign map allows you to pick the next province to attack in a *Risk*-like manner, and each new area you conquer gives you some kind of bonus, such as higher population limits or new technology. You can choose to climb one of three tech trees—pagan, church, or renaissance—each with its own advantages and disadvantages. And finally, there's also a bit of magic tossed in, mostly in the form of special units you acquire, like stone elementals and behemoths.

The game stumbles a bit in presentation, though. The artwork is bland and you'll find yourself constantly fussing with the camera. It's a free-roaming camera, but to manage your troops effectively in battle, you'll have to fiddle with the view to see what's going on. It's a minor annoyance, but a constant one. Mostly, the game suffers from a severe case of the been-there-done-that syndrome.

*Warrior Kings: Battles* is a brick of a game, solid and workmanlike, but oh those curlers! Recommended for hardcore RTS fans or any gamers who have somehow skipped the last six years' worth of RTS titles.

**VERDICT** ★★★½☆

**Good game, but it's a warm glass of milk when you really want a shot of your favorite poison.**



Hmm...there's supposed to be a big, ugly drag queen somewhere around here–if I could just find her.

# Runaway: A Road Adventure

Insert wordplay on game name here **BY DANA JONGEWAARD**

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: **TRI SYNERGY**
DEVELOPER: **GMX MEDIA**
GENRE: **ADVENTURE**
ESRB RATING: **TEEN**
PRICE: **$29.99**
REQUIREMENTS: **PENTIUM 200MHZ, 64MB RAM, 630MB HARD DRIVE SPACE**
RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: **PENTIUM 233MHZ, 128MB RAM, 1.4GB HARD DRIVE SPACE**
MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: **NONE**

Say you dropped a wrench into a planter filled with slimy mud. How would you get the wrench out? One option would be just to reach in and fish it out. What if you don't want to get your hands dirty? Perhaps you could simply tip over the planter so the mud and wrench will come out. How about if you're a game designer for *Runaway*? Oh, well in that case, you'd better go root around in a closet for a flower pot, climb up to the second floor, go out on the balcony, and drop the flower pot on the planter in hopes that it will bounce the wrench out.

And therein lies *Runaway*'s downfall. The game's graphics are fantastic, with a wonderful cartoon look. The story line makes a solid effort to be entertaining. The voice acting is better than your run-of-the-mill adventure game. But the actual gaming in *Runaway*–let's just say I'd rather dive headfirst into a giant planter filled with slimy mud than play a game this nonsensical again.

As Brian, the main character, you accidentally run over a woman who dashes in front of your car in the middle of the night. After taking her to the hospital, you get roped into a cross-country journey that has you fleeing from the Mafia and trying to figure out why they want to kill you. Set in six chapters, each accessible from the Main menu, you visit a number of locales, ranging from a museum to a ghost town.

The puzzles are where the inanity comes in–when solutions aren't illogical, they're horrifically repetitive. For example, once you've figured out that you need to get water to the wrecked train on the outskirts of town, be prepared to carry out a 20-click process through five different scene changes to dump the water in the tank, then go all the way back and repeat the routine four more times. Characters who you're trying to help will throw up stupid obstacles–in one case, a woman refuses to loan you her suntan oil (which you need to execute an escape plan for both of you) because she isn't tan enough yet. It's an exercise in maddening frustration.

If you're anything less than a rabid fan of the genre, then (you guessed it) run away.

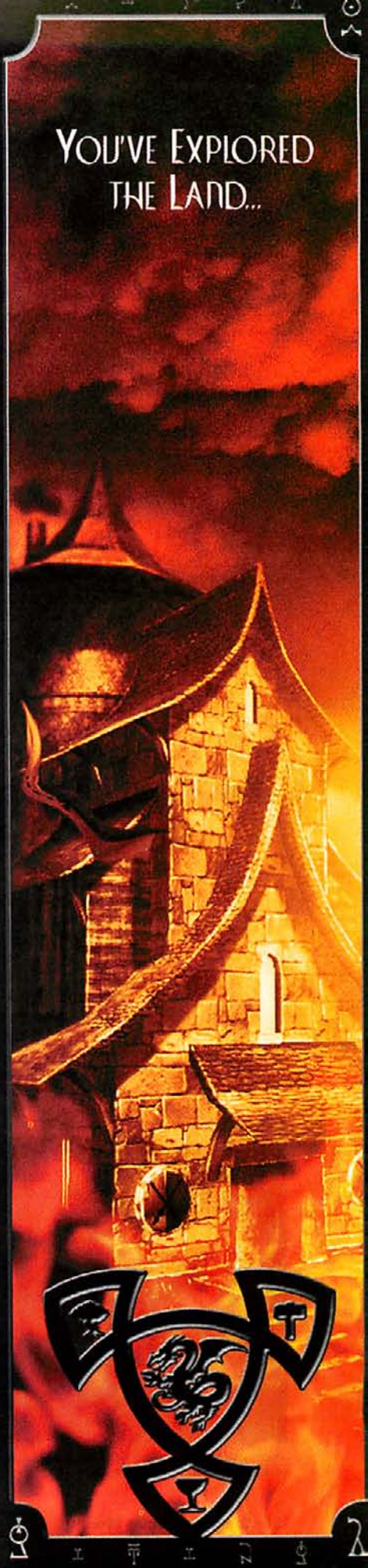
**When the puzzle solutions aren't illogical, they're horrifically repetitive.**



Nice place–who'd you say your interior decorator was again?

**VERDICT** ★★★★★

The bimbo of graphic adventure games: both pretty and stupid.



# Etherlords II

A gathering place for disenchanted ones **BY DANA JONGEWAARD**

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: STRATEGY FIRST
DEVELOPER: NIVAL INTERACTIVE
GENRE: STRATEGY ESRB RATING: TEEN PRICE: $39.99
REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM II 300, 64MB RAM, 1.4GB HARD DRIVE SPACE RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM III 450, 128MB RAM MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: HOTSEAT (2 PLAYERS); LAN, INTERNET (2-8 PLAYERS)

When *Magic: The Gathering Online* came out last year, it was heart-breaking: The gameplay was amazing, but the financial involvement was ludicrous, plus you often got stuck playing against immature opponents who, cloaked by the anonymity of the Internet, would do all manner of things (such as refuse to take their turn for hours so you'd be the one forced to disconnect) not to lose. On the promotional literature for *Etherlords II*, the copy says that it's "similar to *Magic: The Gathering*." And they're not lying: *Etherlords II* is essentially a three-dimensional representation of *Magic*. But does it avoid the same pitfalls?

There are five different campaigns in the game, with each campaign centering on a hero from one of four races: the orc-like Chaots; the bionic, sorcery-loving Synthets; the dryad-like Vitals; and the sea-faring Kinets. While campaigns are largely strategy oriented, there are RPG elements as well, with heroes gathering experience points and leveling up. Ostensibly there are story lines for each of the campaigns, but they're very negligible, and you can skip over all the dialogue windows—in each campaign, it's your hero's race against everyone else, and it's very apparent when you'll be fighting because a window pops up asking if you want to accept the challenge.



The red dragon takes a hit from a Ball of Fire sorcery spell.

**You don't have to spend additional money in order to be able to adequately compete.**

And the turn-based battles are the meat of the game. The strategy lies in tailoring your combat deck (a set of 16 spells) to each opponent. Artifacts in the environment will often add an extra element to the game by providing a variety of disruptions, ranging from ether (the game's version of mana) disturbance to unsummoning. And it's fun seeing an actual visual representation of combat rather than just watching your cards tip to the side. One of the best features of battle is the autocombat option—click on a button and watch as the computer plays your spells, allowing you to learn different ways to use them that you may not have known before.



There won't be any sneak attacks—before each match-up, you're given the option to refuse battle.

The only real complaint I had about the combat system is that sometimes it's confusing trying to figure out what's happening in the heat of battle—you're constantly right-clicking the icons on the top of the screen to figure out what your opponent is doing.

Overall, the game is a big improvement on *Magic*: You don't have to sit around waiting for the other player to decide what move to make, and you don't have to endure the last-minute disconnects of your opponent as he tries to avoid defeat. And if you do miss all that, there's always the *Etherlords II* server, where you have the option to battle other players online. The best part is that, since you are all working with the same set of materials, you know the types of cards your opponent will be working with, and you don't have to spend additional money in order to be able to adequately compete.



A Vital sorceress faces off against my Synthet warrior.

Ultimately, I really enjoyed this game. The string of battle after battle can get a little tedious after a while, and the lack of any compelling story line keeps you from getting completely sucked into the game. But it's a great antidote for those who were disenchanted by *Magic*.

**VERDICT** ★★★★½

**A better, cheaper, 3D version of *Magic: The Gathering*.**



Here, I solve the incredibly difficult puzzle of trying to free myself from a bench.

# Mistmare

The Dark Ages of computer gaming **BY JEFF GREEN**

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: **STRATEGY FIRST**
DEVELOPER: **SINISTER SYSTEMS**
GENRE: **UNCOMPILED PROGRAMMER CODE**
ESRB RATING: **TEEN; ANIMATED BLOOD, MILD LANGUAGE, VIOLENCE** PRICE: **$19.99**
REQUIREMENTS: **PENTIUM III 800, 128MB RAM, 1.05GB HARD DRIVE SPACE**
RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: **AN IQ BELOW 50**
MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: **NONE**

Let me put this as nicely as I possibly can: Strategy First could have put a rotting dead rat in a shoebox and charged $20, and it would still have been a better value than *Mistmare*. Seriously. To even call this product a "computer game" is to stretch the bounds of what that term means: It barely runs on a computer, and if there's a game here, well, good luck finding it, because I never did. Probably because I was too busy rebooting my machine every five minutes. And, yeah, that was after the patch.

Somewhere in here was the germ of a good idea—an alternate fantasy-history story à la Philip K. Dick or Tim Powers, in which the Dark Ages never ended and the Industrial Revolution never occurred. Unfortunately, it appears that the Industrial Revolution never really did occur for *Mistmare*'s Slovenian developer Sinister Systems, because the game seems to have been designed and programmed on an abacus.

**To even call this product a "computer game" is to stretch the bounds of what that term means.**



Do you like to read? Cool! *Mistmare* offers pages and pages of text, with no pesky game to get in the way!

Nothing in the game works. The mouse cursor floats all over the screen, so you can almost make a little minigame of trying to aim it at the dialogue choice you're trying to click. Yay! I clicked it! 50 points! The collision detection is so faulty that you will spend five minutes just trying to get your character out of a doorway or around a bench. That's if you can even select your character, since much of the time either the camera is spinning wildly out of control or the framerate has lurched to a total standstill.

During those odd moments when I was *almost* playing this thing, the game itself was ludicrous. I "solved" so-called quests without doing anything. The story progressed through, literally, pages upon pages of written (and misspelled) dialogue, formatted like a script—as if they forgot to record it or else ran out of time. ("Fuggit—let 'em read.") "Combat" required no player input—a good thing since the controls were broken anyway.

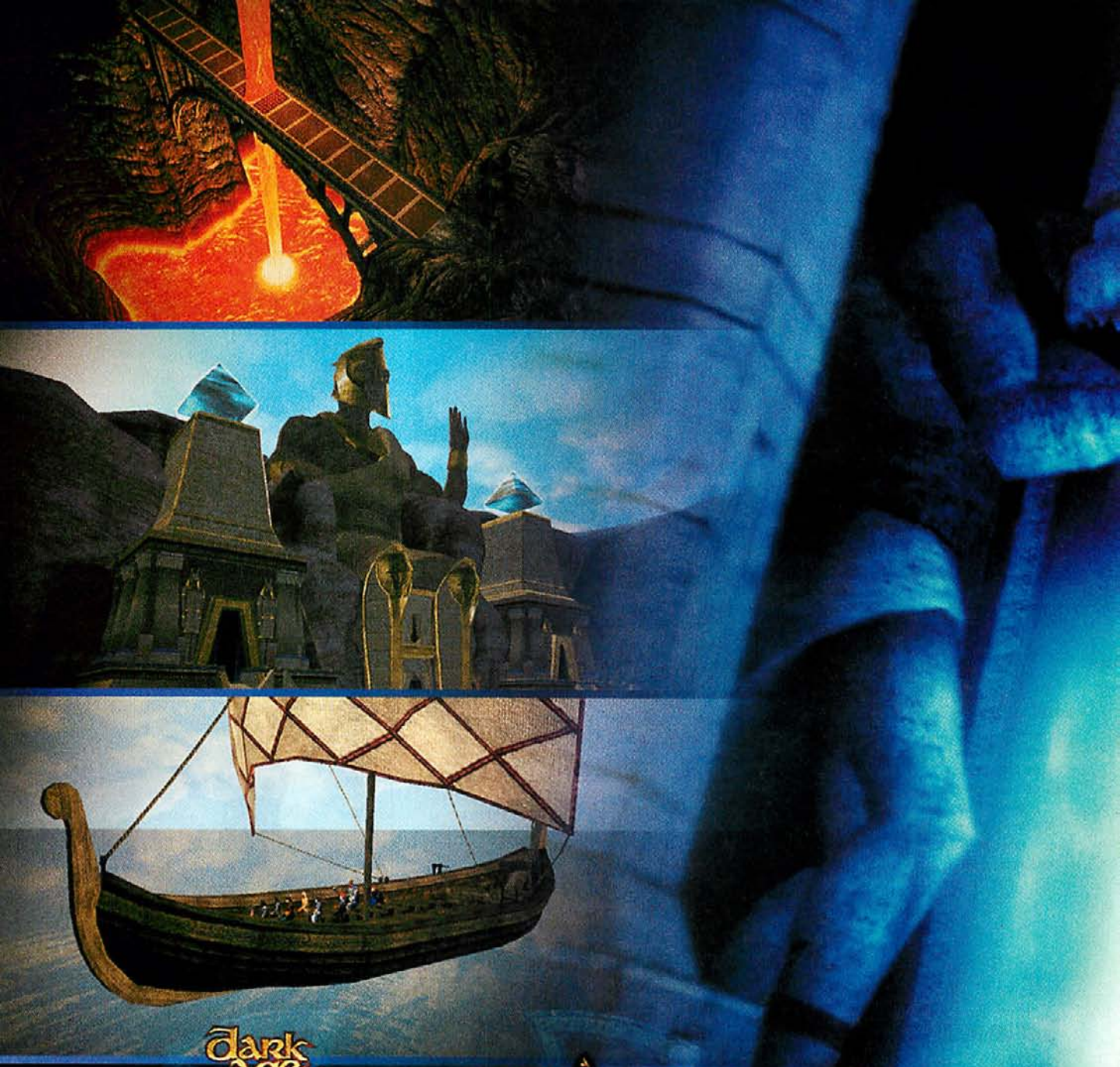
I'll give *Mistmare* one thing: I've never laughed harder while playing a game. But I got it for free. Had I coughed up even one dollar for this piece of junk, I'd be crying.

Steer clear.

**VERDICT** ★★★★★

**Just throw your $20 into the street instead.**



# dark age of Camelot™ TRIALS of ATLANTIS™

Trials of Atlantis: the latest expansion to the award winning online roleplaying game: Dark Age of Camelot. Explore the ancient ruined civilization, find powerful magical treasure, and discover the Atlantean lore.

- Nine new Master Levels, gained only by passing each of the nine Trials of Atlantis.
- 20 new zones to explore - underwater, desert, underground, and ruined islands.
- Oceans full of sunken ruins, treasure and legions of deadly new monsters.
- Player controlled boats take you around the Oceans of Atlantis.
- Graphics engine upgrade presents Atlantis in stunning realism.


LET THE TRIALS BEGIN
www.trialsofatlantis.com/cgw
TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Violence
MYTHIC™
ENTERTAINMENT
the way it's meant to be played
NVIDIA
PC
CD-ROM
SOFTWARE
Copyright © 2003 Mythic Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. Mythic Entertainment, the Mythic Entertainment logo, "Dark Age of Camelot", "Trials of Atlantis," the Dark Age of Camelot and Trials of Atlantis logos and stylized Celtic knot are trademarks of Mythic Entertainment, Inc. All other trademarks property of their respective owners.




The game world feels completely empty, and attempts at flavor (like this newspaper) fall completely flat.

# Republic: The Revolution

Grind and punishment **BY BRUCE GERYK**

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: EIDOS
DEVELOPER: ELIXIR STUDIOS
GENRE: STRATEGY/ROLE-PLAYING
ESRB RATING: TEEN; MATURE, SEXUAL THEMES, VIOLENCE
PRICE: $49.99 REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM III 800, 512MB RAM, 1GB HARD DRIVE SPACE, 32MB 3D CARD RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM 4 2GHZ, 128MB GEFORCE4 3D CARD
MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: NONE

*Republic: The Revolution* is one ambitious game. You are a political dissident in the fictional former Soviet republic of Novistrana, and it's your job to overthrow the brutal totalitarian government, not through violence but through political organizing. The game combines innovative strategy and role-playing with a fully realized 3D game world that you can drop into at any time to watch your characters, watch the enemy, or just take a look around. Unfortunately, both halves of the game are flawed, and they don't fit together particularly well.

As a strategy game, *Republic: The Revolution* is pretty abstract, although the mechanics are fairly deep. Your basic tasks are to gain the support of the populace in various districts of the three successive cities in which you operate, while continually recruiting people to your cause and maintaining their enthusiasm for your struggle. All together, it combines the urgency of a real-time system with the abstractness of a board game.

## Sur-realpolitik

The mechanics are based on three different "ideologies": Force, Influence, and Wealth. In theory, following a different ideology (as determined by your character's initial generation) should allow for different paths through the game. But in practice, there's no significant difference between the ideologies. Since the object of the game is the same no matter which ideology you choose, each choice must provide you with a way to perform the basic game actions. While these actions have different names depending on your ideology, they have similar results—its simply the resource costs that differ. However, since these actions cost resources, and there are only so many districts that provide each of the three ideological resources, it's difficult to play as a single ideology. Even if you do, so what?

Besides a few different mission choices and unique actions, the game plays pretty much the same regardless of your ideological bent. This and the generally linear mission structure severely limit replayability.

You might want to take advantage of the extensive 3D game world. Unfortunately, this vast environment turns out to be singularly uninspiring and completely useless. All actions are planned in the 2D overview, and apart from the very abstract, number-puzzle




As you find out more about a given district, you'll uncover new areas from which to run your operations.








The interface is slick, but it makes it hard for players to get important information quickly.


The online help complements the generally good printed manual.


The game's character-development aspects are bland and uninspiring.

conversation system you use to recruit characters, or occasionally to "dig deeper" for more information, there is absolutely nothing to do here.

Furthermore, any immersion you might have gained from the ability to plunge yourself into this world of intrigue is ruined by the way it's implemented. No matter what your nationality, you won't be able to understand any of the conversations because the characters speak a nonsense sort of mock Slavic–probably like what the Swedish Chef sounds like to Swedes, but for Russians. The character animations are mechanical, and the interactions are all the same, whether they're with a gangster or a guy you saved from a gulag. People walk down the street as though they're at the airport, following those lines on the floor that lead you to Customs.

The attempt to create an immersive game world utterly fails, and you're left with the strategy element, which, although fairly interesting, is too repetitive to hold up to extended play. The ultimate irony? The only part of the expansive 3D world that's indispensable is the schematic 2D overview.

### When putsch comes to shove

The whole premise of *Republic* is further undermined by the game mechanics. You are supposed to be trying to overthrow a brutal Stalinist dictatorship that summarily executes people and keeps thousands of political prisoners. Your parents were dragged out of bed and arrested while you watched. But in the game, you go around holding public rallies, canvassing door-to-door, and handing out leaflets. If you canvass too much in a district, the residents complain to the KGB, much in the same way Americans complain about telemarketers. In fact, instead of fighting the State, your competition is solely with other factions. And the all-powerful Stalinist police state isn't a faction. It's strange to watch your character walk around this police state, showing his clipboard full of revolutionary ideas to people in outdoor cafés. This provides yet another reason to stick to the strategy game and the 2D view.

*Republic* would have been good as a pure strategy game with more varied gameplay, or as a straightforward role-playing adventure with developed plot, characters, and actions. Instead, it feels like the effort put into both parts prevented either from really being finished. It's a shame a rich and complex topic ended up in a game that leaves you with an empty feeling after you play it.

**The only part of the expansive 3D world that's indispensable is the 2D overview.**

**VERDICT** ★★★★★
**Good idea, bad game.**

# Cold Zero: No Mercy

Keep this one on ice **BY RAPHAEL LIBERATORE**

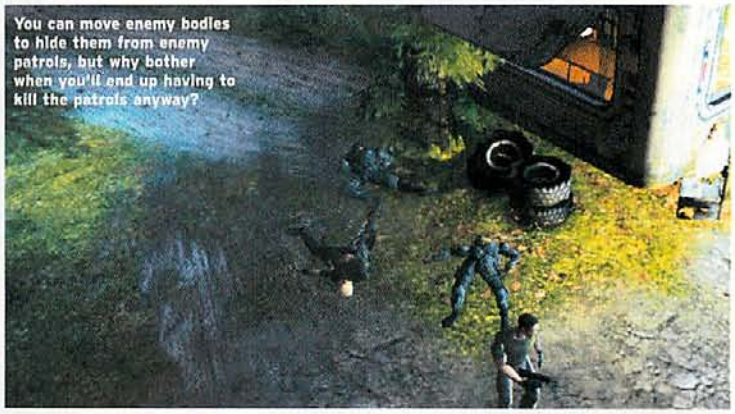
**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: JOWOOD PRODUCTIONS
DEVELOPER: DRAGO ENTERTAINMENT
GENRE: REAL-TIME STRATEGY
ESRB RATING: TEEN; BLOOD, VIOLENCE
PRICE: $39.99
REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM III 750, 128MB RAM, 650MB HARD DRIVE SPACE
RECOMMENDED: PENTIUM III 1GHZ, 850MB HARD DRIVE SPACE, 32MB 3D CARD
MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN, INTERNET (2-16 PLAYERS)

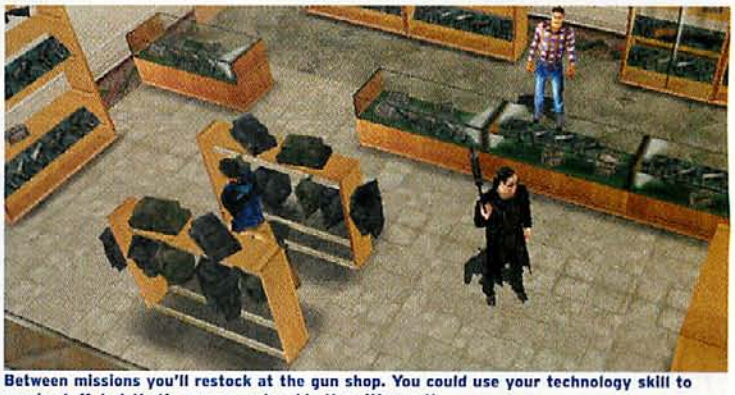
Do you love the challenge of third-person role-playing strategy hybrids like *Fallout Tactics*, *X-Com*, and *Jagged Alliance*? Do you love the fresh strategic challenges of every mission, the exploitation of terrain, and the careful nurturing of individual skills? Are you dying for an heir to this sadly long-vacant throne? Well, keep waiting—*Cold Zero* is yet another in a long line of stumbling pretenders.

Whatever potential *Cold Zero* has is quickly squandered by repetitive combat, loads of dull missions, poorly managed weapons and equipment, and the game's inaccurate belief that you can succeed by sneaking around thugs rather than by blowing them away. Add a clumsy camera interface, lackluster A.I., and a half-assed experience-point system, and *Cold Zero* adds up to something less than zero.

*Cold Zero* focuses on private eye John McAffrey, an ex-SWAT sniper forced into early retirement after accidentally killing a civilian. Business is slow at his detective agency until John links up with a mafia boss and learns firsthand the underpinnings of the criminal world. John eventually ends up on the wrong side of the law while trying to uncover the whereabouts of a deadly virus called—you guessed it—Cold Zero. As John, you'll travel to 16 different locations, including Russia, the Middle East, Central America, and the United States, searching for the phage.



You can move enemy bodies to hide them from enemy patrols, but why bother when you'll end up having to kill the patrols anyway?



Between missions you'll restock at the gun shop. You could use your technology skill to repair stuff, but that's way more trouble than it's worth.

**Fighting endless hoodlums, mercenaries, and thugs is not necessarily a bad thing—monotonous fighting in repetitive missions is.**

By racking up successful missions and a big body count, you gain experience, which in turn leads to skill points. Skill points may be distributed across a small number of categories to improve John's abilities: fighting skills, such as machine gun and close combat, or non-combat-related skills, such as camouflage or technology. The skill list is frustratingly short, made even shorter by certain skills that are apparently meaningless. I maxed out the technology skill, for example, which should have let me open all locked doors, yet it worked less than 50 percent of the time.

While fighting an endless number of hoodlums, mercenaries, and thugs is not necessarily a bad thing, monotonous fighting in repetitive missions is. Each mission starts with John killing lots of bad guys, collecting their weapons and equipment, outfitting himself with their goods to finish the mission, then selling it all after the mission in order to upgrade his arsenal a little. This repetition could conceivably be avoided in a multiplayer game, but trying to locate an online game of *Cold Zero* just about defines futility.



A bland graphics engine does a bang-up job of sucking all sense of life and personality from the game.

The rote nature of the gameplay is doubly regrettable because the game's manual claims you can complete missions stealthily, with no combat. I found this to be basically impossible, though—most missions require some form of combat, and in certain circumstances, it's the only option you have if you're to complete the mission successfully. A poorly implemented camera system also makes the sneaking (and fighting) tedious at best, and futile at worst. *Cold Zero*'s camera is sluggish, there's no zoom feature, and camera placement during combat maneuvers can generously be described as problematic. Poor camera work killed me a handful of times because the limited angle hindered my visibility during the battle.

*Cold Zero* misses the mark on almost everything. My recommendation? Give this loser the cold shoulder.

**VERDICT** ★★★★★

***Cold Zero*'s repetitive, depthless play leaves you cold.**

# Nine new opportunities to ask the historical question, "What if?"

ATARI




"AS IF I NEEDED ANOTHER REASON TO KEEP PLAYING THIS GAME." - IGN PC

See how nine critical conquests in history would turn out if you were in charge. From Mesopotamia to World War II, the *Civilization® III: Conquests* expansion pack gives you more civilizations to play, more maps and terrains, more options for winning, more technologies and wonders, and improved multiplayer. It's the game you love with new ways to love it.

RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for Rating Information.

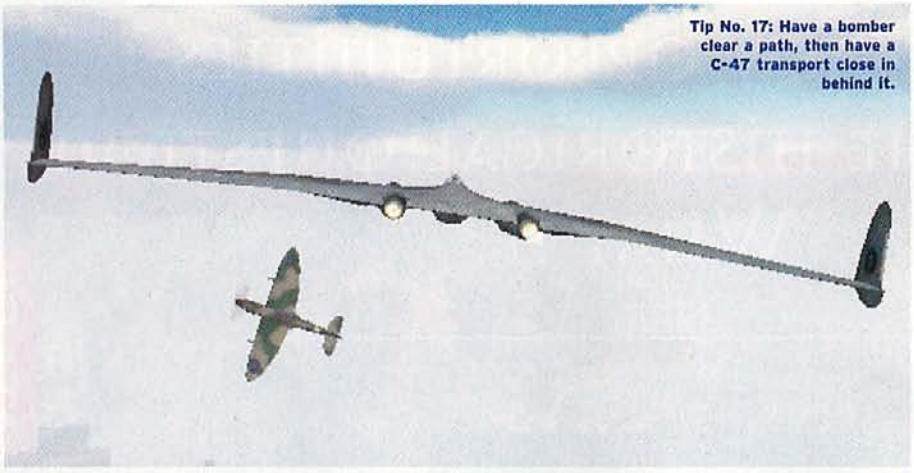
PC CD ROM

FIRAXIS

POWERED BY gamespy

www.civ3.com

© 2003 Atari Interactive, Inc. All Rights Reserved. All trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Sid Meier's Civilization®, Civilization® III, and Civ® are U.S. registered trademarks. Firaxis Games is a trademark of Firaxis Games, Inc. GameSpy Arcade is © 1994-2003 GameSpy Industries, Ltd. The GameSpy logo and "GameSpy" are the trademarks of GameSpy Industries, Ltd.



Tip No. 17: Have a bomber clear a path, then have a C-47 transport close in behind it.



The United States and the Nazis have been busy researching jet technology.

# Battlefield 1942: Secret Weapons of World War II

The secret is out–buy it BY DARREN GLADSTONE

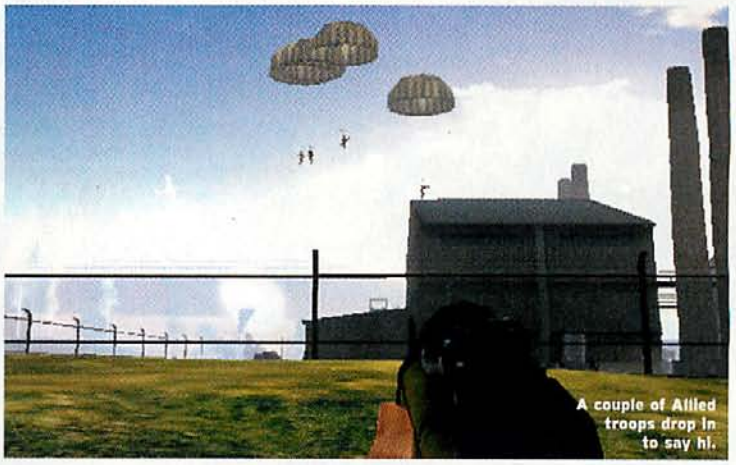
EDITORS' CHOICE COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS
DEVELOPER: DIGITAL ILLUSIONS
GENRE: FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER ESRB RATING: TEEN; VIOLENCE PRICE: $29.99
REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM III 500MHZ, 128MB RAM, 500MB HARD DRIVE SPACE, 32MB 3D CARD RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM III 800MHZ, 256MB RAM, 64MB 3D CARD MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN, INTERNET (2-64 PLAYERS)

*Battlefield 1942* is a great game, there's no doubt about that. But when a company releases not one, but *two* expansions in less than a year's time, an alarm goes off in your head: Are they just milking this thing dry until *Battlefield: Vietnam* comes along in 2004? We say an emphatic "NO!" Where *The Road to Rome* was paved with a few extra maps, weapons, and vehicles, *Secret Weapons of World War II* delivers a new, long-overdue play mode and additions that have a big impact on your tactics.

The most obvious difference comes from the titular secret weapons incorporated into the eight new maps; they range from übertanks and guided missiles to jets and rocket-packs (there are 16 in all). Their inclusion adds a layer of sci-fi "what if" to the each of the scenarios, but the sides are well balanced enough so that neither has a true advantage. The Allies now have the ability to drop paratroopers behind enemy lines, but the Axis can shoot 'em down with a well-timed V2 missile strike. It starts getting tricky when you try handling some of the air power. The ME-262, for instance, shoots over terrain so fast, you'll be flying out of the combat zone before you can say "auf wiedersehen." In fact, it's so tough to control some of these jets that a skilled pilot in a slower plane will usually win the fight.



A couple of Allied troops drop in to say hi.

**Are they just milking this thing dry until *Battlefield: Vietnam* comes along? We say an emphatic "NO!"**

If Digital Illusions had stopped here, we would've happily handed over a four-star review and gotten back to playing. However, this time around, the franchise smartly adds an Objective mode to six of the new maps. We haven't grown tired of the capture-and-hold Conquest battles, but these mission-based matches lead to even more interesting gameplay. For example, in Mimoyecques, the Allied forces are tasked with locating and destroying a few air vents for a cannon, while the Axis must defend. Make sure to keep engineers handy, Fritz, 'cause they can repair damage to the vents.

There is one area in which the game slightly suffers: its age. While *Secret Weapons* still manages to look pretty good by taking advantage of the latest blood patches, the graphics are getting a little long in the tooth.

Is this expansion worth the $30 asking price? If you're a fan of the series, yes. Is it too late to enlist for duty? Never.

**VERDICT** ★★★★½

**This last bit of fuel injection for the aging *Battlefield* engine is worth the money.**

# www.chipsbits.com

your #1 game store




## Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic

Lucas Arts

**$48.95**

Engage in this saga set in the Golden Age of the Republic — over 4,000 years before the first Star Wars film, when both Jedi and Sith number in the thousands. With the Galaxy reeling from a recent conflict with the Dark Lords, the ongoing battle between the Jedi and the Sith rages on. Your actions determine the outcome of this colossal galactic war — and your destiny as a Jedi.

**Knights of the Old Republic — order yours now!**

CHIPS & BITS

EVERY GENRE • ALL PLATFORMS • HARD-TO-FIND GAMES INCLUDING STRATEGY & SIMS • PEN & PAPER BOARDGAMES • CARDGAMES • HARDWARE • COMPLETE SOURCE FOR HINT BOOKS • SPECIAL OFFERS & BARGAINS PHONE OPERATORS AVAILABLE • PROFESSIONAL SERVICE SINCE 1989

PO Box 234 • Dept. 11410 • 2520 VT Rte. 100N • Rochester, VT 05767 • INT'L 802.767.3033 • FAX 802.767.3382 • US 800.699.GAME (4263)

Source Code 11512

12/03 - 3

# Medal of Honor: Allied Assault–Breakthrough

How long until Pacific Assault? BY DI LUO

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS
DEVELOPER: TKO SOFTWARE
GENRE: SHOOTER ESRB RATING: TEEN; VIOLENCE
PRICE: $29.99 REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM II 450, 128MB RAM, 175MB HARD DRIVE SPACE RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM III 700, 256MB RAM, 32MB 3D CARD
MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN, INTERNET (2-32 PLAYERS)

*Breakthrough* tries to do what the *Medal of Honor* series has always done best: Give gamers a host of heavily scripted set-piece battles with cool weapons, vehicles, and other gimmicks, interspersed with treks along linear trails scattered with enemies. This time, the game focuses on the Allies' near disasters at Kasserine Pass, the invasion of Sicily, and the landing at Anzio. The action is intense and usually satisfying, but often predictable.

Due either to historical faithfulness or a cheap way to lengthen the game, you're almost always on the edge of disaster in *Breakthrough*'s 11 missions. Enemy numbers are overwhelming, your allies drop like flies, and you will almost always be low on ammo or health. Though the difficulty seems forced and you'll need to quick-save often, the missions never get quite as frustrating the original's infamous Sniper Town.



Rail-shooting bits are littered throughout the game.



**You're almost always on the brink of disaster in *Breakthrough*'s 11 missions.**

Battles lack the grandeur of the original, and there are no memorable moments like that initial landing at Normandy. There are rarely more than six models onscreen at the same time, and several of the battles are at night. Most of the day missions are restricted to Africa, and even that includes a long battle in a blinding sandstorm. When you finish the game (around 10 hours of play), you won't feel ripped off like many did with *Spearhead*, but there's still a nagging sense of "not quite enough" that's exacerbated by an abrupt ending.

The new materials in the multiplayer mode make up for this a little bit. There are many new maps, as well as the new game mode Liberation, which plays somewhat like a violent form of tag. Players who die are thrown into a prison and must be freed by their teammates. If the entire team is imprisoned, they are "executed" and lose the round.

For true devotees, *Breakthrough* is probably worth the *$29.99 price tag*. For everyone else, *Breakthrough* is an appetizer: good while it lasts, but lacking the substance of an entrée.

**VERDICT** ★★★½☆

**Intense and usually satisfying, but barely good enough to justify the price.**

GAME PATCHES

# Revisionist History

America's Army

By Thomas L. McDonald

Since its release, *America's Army* has kept the pace of patches and enhancements slow but steady, with this year bringing new maps, projectile penetration (with different ratings for cloth, wood, and glass), ricochets, and multiple fixes. The game is ramping up three major releases for the next few months. The first is version 1.9, which adds the first new class in a year: the medic.

Medics will have to complete four separate training missions designed to familiarize people with the responsibilities of medics on a battlefield. The four missions are Airway Management (restoration of breathing), Controlling Bleeding, Treating Shock, and a final field test under battlefield conditions. Once in the game, medics earn points by treating wounded teammates.

Working hand in glove with this new role is a new damage model. When a bullet strikes a soldier, only a portion of that damage is inflicted, while the rest is suffered over time unless the wounded soldier is treated by a medic. Without treatment, soldiers can bleed out, gradually becoming less effective until they die. A medic isn't magic: He can stop further loss of health and restore some effectiveness, but he can't perform a full heal.



In addition, all character models in the game are replaced with new high-res models and textures, and the interface is significantly overhauled for ease of use. Shadows and new surface textures are included, and more textures will be integrated over the next two major releases, which will add Special Forces and vehicles. While the plethora of additions and enhancements (including numerous small fixes) are welcome, some might not find them to be entirely free. Gamers with GeForce 2 and 4MX cards will need to use the lowest graphics settings, which the SDRAM of older cards chokes on the new textures.


This jungle makes the Amazon seem like a botanical garden.
DUNGEON SIEGE
LEGENDS of ARANNA™
Now the original Dungeon Siege comes with 20 more hours of RPG adventures in the mysterious, lush jungle of Aranna. Travel with an arsenal of weapons and spells through rich landscapes where flora and fauna are as lethal as they are stunning. A powerful new pack animal can join you in the battle against relentless enemies, including lizard-like Zaurask, feline Hassat, and giant insects. You and the party you assemble are in a desperate struggle against time to save the world from destruction. Be ready for a challenge — they don't call it a jungle for nothing. www.dungeonsiege.com
TEEN
T
Blood and Gore
Violence
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
PC
CD-ROM SOFTWARE
mad doc SOFTWARE
Microsoft game studios
GAS powered GAMES
©2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Dungeon Siege, Dungeon Siege: Legends of Aranna, and the Microsoft Game Studios logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of the Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. Other products and company names mentioned herein may be trademarks of their respective owners. All rights reserved. Mad Doc and the Mad Doc logos are trademarks of Mad Doc Software, LLC. All rights reserved. The Gas Powered Games logo is a trademark of Gas Powered Games, Corp. All rights reserved.

# Hoyle's Majestic Chess

Training wheels not included **BY DI LUO**

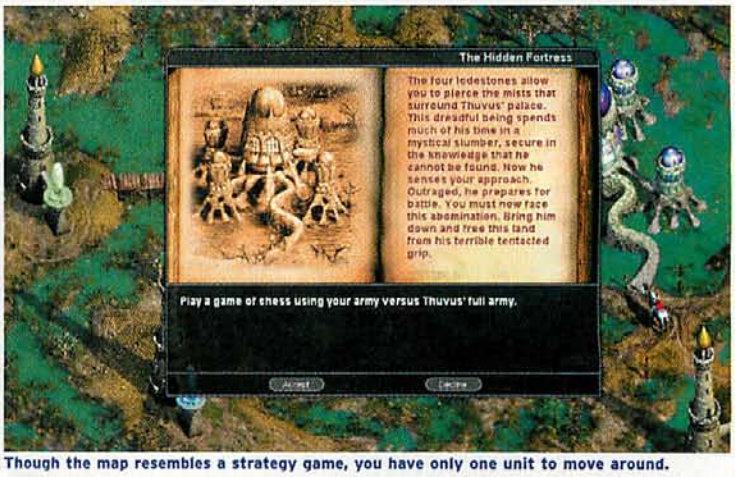
**GAME STATS**
PUBLISHER: **SIERRA**
DEVELOPER: **FLUENT ENTERTAINMENT**
GENRE: **BOARD GAME**
ESRB RATING: **EVERYONE**
PRICE: **$29.99**
REQUIREMENTS: **PENTIUM II 500, 128MB RAM, 175MB HARD DRIVE SPACE**
RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: **PENTIUM III 800, 256MB RAM** MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: **INTERNET (2 PLAYERS)**

To some people, chess is exciting. Like fanatics of all kinds, chess fans obsess over their passion, spending hours reading notation (which looks like a mess of letters and numbers to laymen) from historic games. *Hoyle's Majestic Chess* is not for these people.

Instead of the hardcore, *Majestic Chess* targets novices by introducing them to chess through an "adventure" game that looks more like *Heroes of Might and Magic* than a board game. As the "king," you must defeat evil in your land by facing seven chapters of challenges.

Most of the early lessons are passably competent at teaching the basics. They even touch on more advanced ideas such as theories of pawn structure and board control. The adventure game, however, runs into problems as it progresses. If you fail the quizzes or games, *Majestic Chess* doesn't tell you what you did wrong. For newbies, and even average players, this might quickly devolve into a frustrating game of trial and error. Many of the tutorials on more advanced ideas are too brief and aren't good at clarifying advanced chess theory. Parents should also be warned that the tutorial language can be complicated and its lack of in-depth instruction might make it difficult for children to comprehend.

**_Majestic Chess_ targets novices by introducing them to chess through an "adventure" game.**




**Though the map resembles a strategy game, you have only one unit to move around.**

The classical chess portions of the game lack in comparison with serious simulations, like *Chessmaster*. There are few customization options, only a handful of famous games, and no tutorial to assist newbies with openings. It does, however, provide a multiplayer interface that's pretty easy to use.

While it ultimately fails to be an easily accessible, helpful tool to teach the true novice how to play chess well, *Majestic Chess* is a well-made product that provides good competition for amateur players who aren't too serious about their game. Many of its lessons and problems will perhaps introduce these players to some of the game's intricacies.

**VERDICT** ★★★½☆

**A valiant attempt at chess for dummies that doesn't quite teach dummies but does provide some decent chess.**

# Heaven & Hell

Boring and dull **BY THOMAS L. MCDONALD**

**GAME STATS**
PUBLISHER: **CDV**
DEVELOPER: **EIGELB/MADCAT**
GENRE: **REAL-TIME STRATEGY**
ESRB RATING: **EVERYONE**
PRICE: **$49.99**
REQUIREMENTS: **PENTIUM III 800, 64MB RAM, 950MB HARD DRIVE SPACE**
RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: **PENTIUM III 1.5 GHZ, 256MB RAM, 1.5GB HARD DRIVE SPACE** MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: **IN-GAME LOBBY (2-8 PLAYERS)**

It's been a long time since we've seen a really good *Populous* rip-off. Not that *Heaven & Hell* is a really good *Populous* rip-off. It's actually a really bad one, as though the designers were trying to copy a game they watched someone else play for a few minutes. It makes you pine for *Afterlife*, and that's just wrong.

*Heaven & Hell* is a tedious one-note god game with a religious theme and copious borrowings from *Black & White* and *Populous*. Though Good and Evil vie for control of the hearts and property of little people running around villages, there is little distinction between the two sides. Spells and units have different names for each side, but strategically they all do the same things. Baptisbon/Baptismael enter a village, perform rituals to influence the people on a good/evil scale, and then convert them.

Once people are converted, their homes can produce mana or enforcers. The other units are warrior, merchant, builder, troublemaker, spy, and boss, each ultimately working to maintain influence. The developers didn't even bother to give units distinct names–they just change the suffix to "bon" or "mael." This has the effect of nullifying replay value, particularly since you can play the Evil side of the campaign game only after you win the Good side. The paucity of stand-alone, noncampaign maps and their nondescript design further hinder any chance of long-term enjoyment.

The game ultimately becomes little more than a highly irritating matter of constantly using the same few commands. Every single game devolves into dueling preachers, and since these preachers are just, well, preaching, instead of righteously smiting one another, it all becomes abstract and passive-aggressive. In the end, what the people do isn't interesting, and it takes a lot of work to make them do it.



**There are precious few God powers: lightning, earthquake, plague, strew flowers or skulls, and a hand.**

**VERDICT** ☆☆☆☆☆

**Witless, repetitive, and utterly devoid of interesting strategy elements.**

# THE LORDS OF STRATEGY RETURN

"Cast aside the fallen Hero and welcome back the Warlord..."
-Computer Gaming World






# WARLORDS IV
## HEROES OF ETHERIA™

**TACTICS-INTENSIVE TURN-BASED STRATEGY**

Prepare for the ultimate conquest as the king of fantasy turn-based strategy returns with an all-new tactical combat system designed by Steve Fawkner, original creator of the Warlords saga.

**http://warlords4.ubi.com**

Play It On ubi.com™

TEEN T Blood Violence CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Ubi Soft ENTERTAINMENT®
www.ubi.com

Infinite Interactive

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

© 2003 Ubi Soft Entertainment. Ubi Soft, ubi.com, and the Ubi Soft logo are trademarks of Ubi Soft Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. Warlords IV: Heroes of Etheria is a trademark of Infinite Interactive. Developed by Infinite Interactive. All rights reserved.

# Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4

Skate or die. Or at least injure yourself real good **BY RYAN SCOTT**

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION** DEVELOPER: **BEENOX** GENRE: **EXTREME SPORTS** ESRB RATING: **TEEN; BLOOD, MILD LYRICS** PRICE: **$39.99** REQUIREMENTS: **PENTIUM III 800MHZ, 256MB RAM, 700MB HARD DRIVE SPACE, 32MB 3D CARD** RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: **NONE** MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: **LAN, INTERNET SUPPORT (2-8 PLAYERS)**

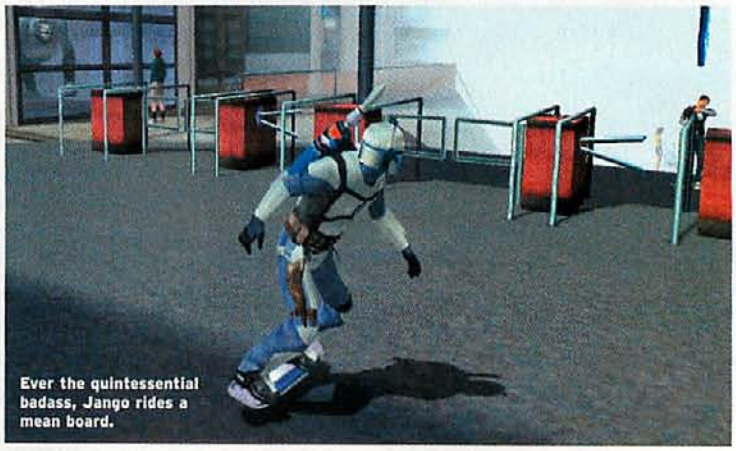
**You're given a wider degree of freedom than in the series' past entries.**

If I had a dime for every time I've watched some torn-jeans-clad punk wannabe skater kid eat asphalt while trying to execute a kickflip over a cement bump in a vacant parking space...well, I'd have a lot of dimes. And for those dimes, *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4* brings this and much more to the table—it gives you the chance to be the skateboard virtuoso you never were.

Like its predecessors, *THPS4* puts you in the proverbial kneepads of a number of professional skaters (among them, Tony Hawk himself). After customizing your chosen boarder's appearance to your heart's content (cowboy bikers with oversized sunglasses are the bomb, yo), you're off to strut your stuff at the skate park in the game's Career mode.

Time limits are eschewed here, making many of the game's challenges more manageable than they have been in the series' past entries. Instead, you're given a wide degree of freedom as you explore any of several large, nicely detailed arenas (most of which you'll have to unlock). Talking to the characters strewn about these arenas will trigger events, which invariably involve lots of impressive jumps and tricks on your part. The better your performance, the more points you score. Simple, right?

Unfortunately, pulling off these long sequences of tricks is maddeningly difficult using the default keyboard controls. As it is a port of last year's console versions, *THPS4* is meant to be played with a gamepad, pure and simple. The keyboard is just plain detrimental to the gameplay, and anything other than a gamepad will undoubtedly lead to an exercise in frustration.



Ever the quintessential badass, Jango rides a mean board.

Control nitpicks aside, *THPS4* is definitely fun stuff. Grinding down rails, sliding around on half-pipes, and carrying out all manner of elaborate flips and jumps is satisfying, not to mention cool looking. For all the masochists out there, you can also stage brutal and often amusing wipeouts if you try hard enough. Practice and timed modes, eight-player LAN/Internet support, a good soundtrack, and plenty of bells and whistles (including a cameo by *Star Wars* luminary Jango Fett) round out the game nicely.

Whether you're looking to relive your glory days or just have a bit of fast-paced fun, *THPS4* is a worthwhile purchase for any extreme-sports enthusiast. Just make sure you trade your kneepads for a gamepad first.

**VERDICT** ★★★★½

**As long as you've got a gamepad, it's the most fun you can have on a skateboard without putting yourself in the hospital.**

# AquaNox 2: Revelation

Thar she blows **BY JOHNNY LIU**

**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: **JOWOOD PRODUCTIONS** DEVELOPER: **MASSIVE DEVELOPMENT** GENRE: **ACTION** ESRB RATING: **MATURE; MILD VIOLENCE, STRONG LANGUAGE** PRICE: **$39.95** REQUIREMENTS: **PENTIUM III 750, 128MB RAM, 2GB HARD DRIVE SPACE, 32MB 3D CARD** RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: **NONE** MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: **NONE**

A little crab told me life is better down where it's wetter. Damn lying crustacean—I want to smash his face in! After a game like *AquaNox 2: Revelation*, my plans are to stay high and dry.

Set in the underwater world of Aqua, *AquaNox 2* tells the story of William Drake. One day, Drake heads out for some adventure and self-discovery, only to be promptly captured by pirates and forced to do their dirty bidding.

Essentially, *AquaNox 2* is a lobotomized first-person shooter. Invisible walls and glass ceilings abound throughout the briny deep, ensnaring players in a boring series of follow-the-leader and circle-strafing style stages. On top of that, the unimpressive weapons feel like you're lobbing spitballs with a limp arm. One character describes firing these weapons like "an old man peeing." That couldn't be further from the truth...I think...I'm not so sure what he was getting at, frankly.

Still, that line aptly describes the game's special brand of storytelling. The writing jumps from overwrought exposition to hackneyed convention, including the jive black man and the coy Asian girl. It doesn't help that the voice acting is completely spotty. Between stages, you must click your way through waves of audio-chat files. There aren't any decisions to make or alternate dialogue choices—just click through the meandering radio drama. The rock background tracks are upbeat, but out of place.

The character art used to prop up the dialogue is well-illustrated, but the rest of the graphics don't fare as well. The first *AquaNox* was a graphical benchmark for the GeForce3. *AquaNox 2* is a benchmark for your monitor's brightness settings. Environments are dismally murky. Trust me, not the crab: This game deserves a one-way trip to Davy Jones' locker.



**Incredibly, *AquaNox 2* looks worse than the first game.**

**VERDICT** ★½☆☆☆

**Like drowning in a sea of boredom.**

# 4 Epic Experiences In One Game!

## TRADE



**TRADE** YOUR WAY TO MOGUL STATUS!

## FIGHT



**FIGHT** FOR YOUR LIFE AND INCREASE YOUR NOTORIETY AMONGST YOUR PEERS!

## BUILD



**BUILD** YOUR EMPIRE AS YOU SEE FIT!

## THINK



**THINK** BEFORE YOU LET YOUR FLEET ROAM, YOUR NEXT MOVE COULD BE YOUR LAST!

X2

Are you prepared to meet the Threat?

# THE THREAT

*"...Today X² is already coming up and makes **Freelancer** look pale..."*
PC Games

WWW.X2-GAME.COM

*"Space trading/combat games are rare – good ones even more so. If golden oldies like Privateer, Hardwar or the venerable **Elite** series ever floated your space boat then X² will be a game to look forward to".*
PC Zone Online

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more ratings information.

EGOSOFT

www.enlight.com

ENLIGHT

©2003 Enlight Interactive, Inc. ©2003 Egosoft. All rights reserved.
All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

ABS® Recommends Microsoft® Windows® XP

Free

Creative Rhomba
128MB MP3 Player
{ After Rebate }



Free with Purchase of Ultimate M6 or M5[64]

# Gaming Has Evolved



- The first 64-bit PC Processor in a class by itself designed specifically for cinematic computing
- Full throttle technology for immersive gaming and amazing digital media

PC WORLD BEST BUY
Ultimate M5 October 2003

GAMING PC EDITORS' CHOICE
November 2002

Editors' Choice c|net
November 2002

EDITOR'S CHOICE FiringSquad
January 2003

TECH edge BEST BUYS
November 2002

PC MAGAZINE EDITORS' CHOICE
November 2002

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
May 2003

READER'S CHOICE PC MAGAZINE
August 5, 2003
OVERALL DESKTOPS
HOME DESKTOPS
ABS Computer Technologies, Inc.

AMD 64 Athlon

AMD 64 Athlon FX

The **ONLY** Windows-compatible 64-bit PC processor

Customer Satisfaction
**ABS® Computer**




**Dell**




**Gateway**




>> Source: Resellerratings.com September 12, 2003



## ABS® Ultimate M6

**Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition**
**AMD Athlon™ 64 Processor with HyperTransport™ Technology**
**The ONLY Windows-compatible 64-bit PC processor**
**1600MHz System Bus**
Antec PlusView 1000AMG Case with Acrylic Window
nForce™3 DDR400 8X AGP Asus Motherboard w/Gigabit LAN & IEEE 1394
Mushkin 1GB DDR400 Memory
**Two Seagate 80GB SATA Hard Drives in RAID-0 Configuration**
Lite-On 16X DVD-ROM
***NEW* Nvidia FX5950 Ultra 256MB DDR Video Card**
Antec True 480 Watt Power Supply
Nvidia nForce™3 5.1 Surround Sound
Ideazon Zboard™ Keyboard with Interchangeable Keysets
Free Software: Microsoft® Works 7.0
Free Software: McAfee Virus Scan 7.0 with 1 Year of Updates
Free 1 Year Onsite Service with 24/7 Technical Support
Free ABS® PC Organizer (3" Color Binder for Manual, Drivers, etc.)
*Add* NEC 22" .25mm 1920x1440 Color Monitor @ $549
*Add* Logitech Z-680 5.1 Surround Sound Speakers @ $290

***AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-51 Processor***
**$2499**

**Lian-Li Mid-Tower Case Also Available**



## ABS® Ultimate M5[64]

**Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition**
**AMD Athlon™ 64 Processor with HyperTransport™ Technology**
**The ONLY Windows-compatible 64-bit PC processor**
**1600MHz System Bus**
Antec PlusView 1000AMG Case with Acrylic Window
Antec True 480-Watt Power Supply
**Nvidia nForce™3 DDR400 AGP 8X Motherboard w/Gigabit LAN & IEEE 1394**
Corsair XMS 512MB PC3200 Dual-Channel DDR SDRAM Memory
**Two Seagate 80GB 7200RPM Serial ATA150 Hard Drives w/8MB Cache**
Lite-On 16X DVD Player
**LeadTek WinFast A350 Nvidia FX5900 Ultra 256MB DDR Video Card**
Nvidia nForce™3 5.1 Surround Sound
Ideazon Zboard™ Keyboard with Interchangeable Keysets
Free Software: Microsoft® Works 7.0
Free Software: McAfee Virus Scan 7.0 with 1 Year of Updates
Free 1 Year Onsite Service with 24/7 Technical Support
Free ABS® PC Organizer (3" Color Binder for Manual, Drivers, etc.)
*Add* NEC 22" .25mm 1920x1440 Color Monitor @ $549
*Add* Logitech Z-680 5.1 Surround Sound Speakers @ $290

***AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor***
**$1849**

ABS

# www.abspc.com/4game 800.876.8088

▸1 Year Limited Parts Warranty ▸ Lifetime Labor Warranty ▸ Lifetime Toll-Free Tech Support ▸30 Days Money Back Guarantee
▸▸Sales Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30AM-5:30PM PST ▸▸Technical Support: Mon-Fri 8:30AM-5:30PM PST

Price, specification, and terms are subject to change without notice. Illustrations may not accurately represent exact configurations priced. ABS® is not responsible for errors in typography and or photography. 30 day money back guarantee does not include opened software, parts, or special order merchandise. Original shipping and handling fee along with return shipping charge are non refundable. Products returned after 30 days or in a non refundable condition are subject to a restocking fee. Onsite service may be provided by contracted third party provider. Technician will be dispatched if necessary following phone support. AMD model numbers are a simple, accurate representation of relative processor performance on industry-standard software benchmarks. Model numbers convey relative performance among different AMD processors to help you simplify your PC purchase decision.

# Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004

Burning bright BY JEFF LACKEY

EDITORS' CHOICE COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

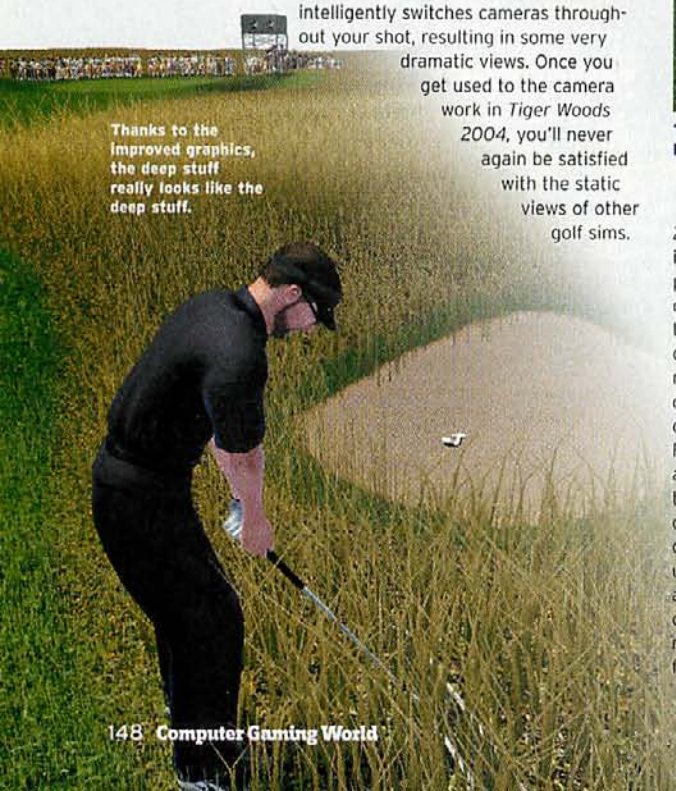
**GAME STATS**

PUBLISHER: EA SPORTS
DEVELOPER: HEADGATE STUDIOS
GENRE: SPORTS SIMULATION
ESRB RATING: EVERYONE
PRICE: $39.95 REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM III 333, 128MB RAM, 1.3GB HARD DRIVE SPACE RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM III 866, 256MB RAM, 64MB 3D CARD MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN, INTERNET (2-4 PLAYERS)

Golf games used to be judged purely on the quality of the graphics and the accuracy of the simulation, their target market being golf aficionados. But just as Tiger Woods has expanded interest in professional golf to the masses, *Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004* adds gameplay features that make PC golf an exciting experience for the serious PC golfer and casual gamer alike.

This year's incarnation of *Tiger Woods* enhances the innovative gameplay first introduced in *Tiger Woods 2003*. The swing interface, easily the best in the genre, has been modified just enough (for those who felt last year's version was too easy for serious players) to make gameplay a tough but fair challenge at the higher difficulty levels. Ball physics have been tweaked so that rough, wind, and hillside lies have a more accurate effect on ball flight, while chipping and putting have been refined to yield a more realistic challenge. The overall golf simulation is solid enough to convincingly convey the impression of real-life play to even the pickiest of golf fanatics.

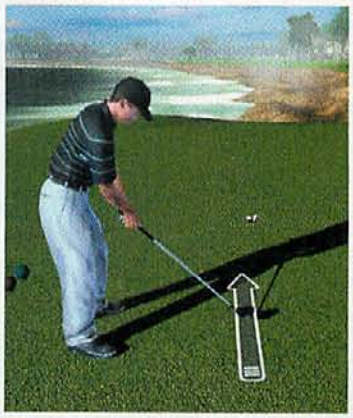
From the crash of the animated waves on the beaches of Pebble Beach to the soft glows of sunsets on the eighteenth hole at Sawgrass to the animated flocks of birds that flap across the sky, you won't find a prettier sports game of any type. The television-style presentation intelligently switches cameras throughout your shot, resulting in some very dramatic views. Once you get used to the camera work in *Tiger Woods 2004*, you'll never again be satisfied with the static views of other golf sims.



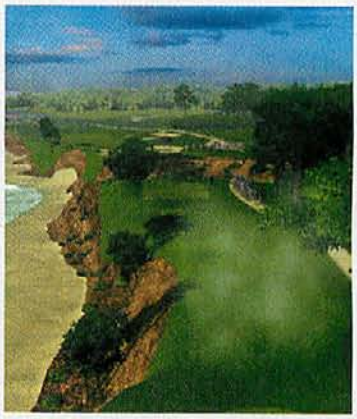
Thanks to the improved graphics, the deep stuff really looks like the deep stuff.




Use the Face Maker to put your crazy Uncle Willard in the game (or not.)



Tiger lines up a drive over the waves of Pebble Beach.



The auto-cam produces some very dramatic views of the course.

What really separates *Tiger Woods 2004* from the pack is the plethora of interesting gameplay features. You can play the traditional rounds of golf, in any of 14 game modes, against 16 PGA and LPGA (just one—Natalie Gulbis) players, or you can play a full season of tournaments. But the most fascinating option is the Career mode, in which you create a golfer (using the new Game Face feature to customize his or her appearance right down to tattoos) and then take him through a series of challenges and tournaments. As your golfer progresses, he can earn money, unlock new items in the pro shop, advance in skills, and even earn a commercial sponsorship. The Career mode has been significantly expanded from *Tiger Woods 2003*'s, and adds a role-playing aspect to the game that will fascinate both casual players and hardcore virtual golfers. You can even use your "career golfer" in online play on EA's EASO multiplayer server (which is now a free service for all *Tiger Woods 2004* players).

*Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004* isn't perfect—there are still nitpicky flaws here and there, but none that qualify as significant detractions to the overall game. *Tiger Woods 2004* has raised the bar on golf sims to a level that competitors will have to scramble to match.

**VERDICT** ★★★★½

**A game that will please both hardcore golf-sim addicts and casual gamers.**

**ONE GRAND PRIZE WINNER** will be treated to a day of relaxation and pampering at a spa in the morning, then to a fancy lunch at an upscale restaurant. The winner will then go on a shopping spree at any store they like with a $1000 credit line for clothes, accessories, or whatever. Finally, the winner and five friends will go out to a hot club for a night on the town!**

**The Grand Prize winner will also receive:**

- The Sims™ Bustin' Out T-shirt
- A copy of The Sims™ Bustin' Out on any console, signed by Will Wright, creator of The Sims™

**10 Second Place Winners will receive:**

- The Sims™ Bustin' Out T-shirt
- A copy of The Sims™ Bustin' Out on any console, signed by Will Wright, creator of The Sims™

**25 Third Place Prizes:**

- A copy of The Sims™ Bustin' Out on any console

* See website for full contest rules, terms and conditions
** Must be 18 or older to qualify for Grand Prize



# ARE YOU IN A RUT?

**BUST OUT OF YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE BY ENTERING THIS CONTEST TODAY! ENTER TO WIN BY LOGGING ON TO:**
**http://winsims.zdgames.com***

**MOM WANTS YOU TO**

# BUST OUT

## OF YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE!

EA GAMES

MAXIS

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

The Sims BUSTIN' OUT

© Electronic Arts Inc. Electronic Arts, The Sims, EA GAMES, the EA GAMES logo, Maxis and the Maxis logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. in the US and/or other countries. All Rights Reserved. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. EA GAMES™ and MAXIS™ are Electronic Arts™ brands.

Visit **www.eagames.com** for more information on The Sims Bustin' Out

# REVIEWINDEX

*CGW* capsules of recent reviews. Game names in red indicate an Editor's Choice game.

| GAME | ISSUE | VERDICT | SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age of Wonders: Shadow Magic | 11/03 | A great *Shadow Magic* strategy game that's worth purchasing for the random-map generator alone | ★★★★½ |
| Big Mutha Truckers | 9/03 | This big-rig game is better than it has any right to be | ★★★☆☆ |
| Chariots of War | 11/03 | As dry and inviting as the Arabian Desert | ★★☆☆☆ |
| Combat Command 2: Danger Forward | 11/03 | A great scenario editor can't lift this average grand-tactical wargame above | ★★★☆☆ |
| Dark Fall: The Journal | 11/03 | The only thing missing from this eerie game's box is a change of underwear | ★★★★☆ |
| Disciples II: Guardians of Light/Servants of Dark | 7/03 | More cartoony goodness (and evil) at a bargain price | ★★★½☆ |
| The Elder Scrolls III: Bloodmoon | 9/03 | This solid expansion effectively increases the landmass of *Morrowind* to exceed that of Earth's | ★★★★☆ |
| Endless Ages | 10/03 | Something new in the massively multiplayer field that's worth a look | ★★★☆☆ |
| Enter the Matrix | 8/03 | Play it for the movie, don't play it for the play | ★★½☆☆ |
| Eve Online: The Second Genesis | 9/03 | We'd hate to see the first genesis of this MMO space game | ★★☆☆☆ |
| F1 Challenge '99-'02 | 9/03 | A must-buy for Formula 1 racing fans | ★★★★½ |
| F/A-18 Operation Iraqi Freedom | 11/03 | Nothing really new here, but worth a look if you need a new sim for a slow system | ★★½☆☆ |
| Ghost Master | 11/03 | This game is clever, stylish, and fun to watch, but it's a little too hard to control | ★★★½☆ |
| Grand Theft Auto: Vice City | 8/03 | *CGW*'s 2002 Game of the Year gets some '80s-style clothes in this sequel | ★★★★★ |
| The Great Escape | 11/03 | Not as bad as a month in the cooler, but not much better either | ★★☆☆☆ |
| The Hulk | 9/03 | Best comic-book game not named *Freedom Force* you can buy | ★★★★☆ |
| Korsun Pocket | 9/03 | It sounds like a microwaveable snack, but it's the best hex-based war game ever | ★★★★★ |
| Legacy Online | 10/03 | A tedious exercise at best | ★☆☆☆☆ |
| Lionheart: Legacy of the Crusader | 11/03 | Unbalanced, tedious, buggy, and lacking in imagination—and those are its good points | ★½☆☆☆ |
| Madden NFL 2004 | 11/03 | Easily the best *Madden* game yet, but be prepared to buy a gamepad | ★★★★½ |
| Medieval: Total War-Viking Invasion | 8/03 | This expansion is a must for *Total War* fans | ★★★★½ |
| Microsoft Flight Simulator 2004 | 10/03 | The most fun you can have in a plane without guns | ★★★★½ |
| Midnight Club II | 10/03 | What it lacks in multiplayer, it more than makes up for in fun | ★★★½☆ |
| Neverwinter Nights: Shadows of Undrentide | 9/03 | A much better single-player game than the original | ★★★★☆ |
| Nexagon: Deathmatch | 11/03 | Rock/paper/scissors is a more challenging strategy game | ★★☆☆☆ |
| Pirates of the Caribbean | 11/03 | Two half-good games don't equal one good one | ★★☆☆☆ |
| Port Royale | 8/03 | After a slow start, a quality pirate game emerges | ★★★½☆ |
| Red Faction II | 9/03 | Only edged out by *Wolverine* as worst console port so far this year | ★★☆☆☆ |
| Rise of Nations | 8/03 | The latest, greatest historical RTS | ★★★★½ |
| The Sims: Superstar | 8/03 | Another solid addition to the planet's best-selling game | ★★★★☆ |
| Star Trek: Elite Force II | 9/03 | Like playing one of the less-compelling TV episodes | ★★★½☆ |
| Star Wars Galaxies: An Empire Divided | 10/03 | Might get a whole lot better | ★★½☆☆ |
| Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness | 10/03 | Not as bad as the movie—oh wait, yes it is | ★½☆☆☆ |
| Tron 2.0 | 10/03 | Best movie-licensed game of the year so far | ★★★★½ |
| WarCraft III: The Frozen Throne | 9/03 | Some nice new stuff, but you pay in micromanagement | ★★★★☆ |
| Will Rock | 11/03 | To quote a Twisted Sister classic: We're not gonna take it! | ★★½☆☆ |
| World War II: Frontline Command | 10/03 | Bad interface, boring missions, and no realism, but the documentary footage is OK! | ★★☆☆☆ |
| X2: Wolverine's Revenge | 9/03 | Save your money and buy the eventual *X-Men 2* DVD instead | ★½☆☆☆ |

## CGW RECOMMENDS



### Rainbow Six 3: Raven Shield

★★★★★

Tom Clancy's tactical action series got even better with this follow-up to *Rainbow Six* and *Rogue Spear*. A slick interface, additional weapons, improved A.I., and more options (such as a new Observation mode and the ability to handcuff baddies) make this an excellent entry into the series.



### Day of Defeat

★★★★★

Like the juggernaut that is *Counter-Strike*, this *Half-Life* mod (previously available as a free download) was given ultimate legitimacy by Valve's development of a retail version. If you have yet to get your fix from *Battlefield 1942* and countless other WWII-era games that have been cropping up lately, this squad-based combat mod is worth your time and money.



### PlanetSide

★★★★★

Judging from how much time Darren spends playing this game, it must be the most addictive MMOFSPSRTSRPG since...ever. Participating in squad-based combat with live players is a lot of fun—assuming your teammates don't suck. Then again, nothing's stopping you from popping a cap in unruly comrades, either.

# ON SALE NOW!

Look for **Xbox Nation #10** (Oct. - Nov. 2003 Issue) featuring **True Fantasy Live Online** on **TWO COLLECTIBLE COVERS** at Borders, Barnes and Noble, Waldenbooks, B. Dalton, Babbages, GameStop, Funcoland, Walmart, Kmart, Target, Walgreens, CVS, Kroger and Safeway.










○ Xbox Nation Premiere Issue $12.00




○ Xbox Nation #2 $12.00




○ Xbox Nation #3 $12.00




○ Xbox Nation #4 $12.00




○ Xbox Nation #5 $12.00




○ Xbox Nation #6 $12.00




○ Xbox Nation #7 $12.00




○ Xbox Nation #8 $12.00




○ Xbox Nation #9 $12.00

## IS YOUR XBOX NATION LIBRARY COMPLETE?

Order these back issues to make sure that you have a complete reference library of the most valuable tricks, cheats, and codes for all the top games on your console.

**HOW TO ORDER:**

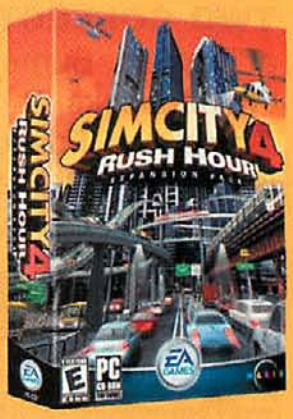
Simply check off which magazines you want and send in the order form (photocopies accepted) along with a check made payable to Ziff Davis Media, for the amount indicated for each magazine plus shipping and handling—add $3 for U.S., $3 for Canada and $5 for foreign orders—in U.S. funds only for each magazine! Orders should be mailed to: Back Issues, 1411 Opus Place, Ste. 340, Downers Grove, IL 60515. Price and availability subject to change without notice.

# www.chipsbits.com

your #1 game store

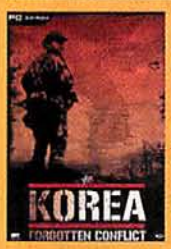
## pc

## SimCity 4: Rush Hour EA




**$19.95**

With the new SimCity™ 4 Rush Hour Expansion Pack* your city is on the move. Get your Sims on the road to happiness as you take total control of your city's transportation. Take charge of vehicles en route to destinations or disasters, and take to the streets to control your city at a new level. Put Sims on the move in zeppelins, helicopters, ferries, and new cars. Unlock more vehicle choices as you gain traction with your cities' transportation problems. Choose from all-new road types including wide avenues, suspension bridges, or one way streets. Map out a seamless regional network that whisks Sims from one city to another. Add popular structures such as historic rail stations or classic Americana road marks. Go global and create your city based on a modern European building set. Make your final mark as mayor and personalize your cities by choosing street names, mountains, neighborhoods, and points of interest. In SimCity 4 Rush Hour, put your foot on the gas and get your Sims on the go!




### Korea: Forgotten Conflict
Take2

**$37.95**

Korea: Forgotten Conflict is similar in style to the 'Commandos' series where the player takes on the role of leader of a small group of military specialists. Set in Larry Bond's HARPOON
Set in Korea during the conflict between North and South Korea, the game offers an authentic setting from the period - along with all its nuances. Diversity in locations - such as enemy bases, airfields, railway stations, factory facilities, Prisoner of War camps, as well as harbours, historical palaces and monasteries - bring each detailed scenario to life.




### Harpoon 4
Ubi Soft

**$39.95**

The world's naval powers are now at your command!

Features: Detailed Order of Battle with over 1000 ships, subs and aircraft from 14 nations. A highly detailed map of the Northern European region, created from satellite imagery. Customizable map display with overlays including weapons, sensor and fuel ranges, as well as bathymetric, weather, cloud cover, threat zone and satellite data. A detailed, tactical 3D environment where players can view critical events. An extensive database of units, weapons, and sensors. The open-architecture database allows advanced players to create their own ships, aircraft and vehicles.




### XIII
Ubi Soft

**$39.95**

You wake up on a desolate strip of New England beach. The near-fatal impact of a bullet has left your head pounding, and your memory erased. What's more, the number "XIII" has been mysteriously tattooed on your chest, while your pocket holds a key to a New York City bank box. Head swimming in amnesia, you struggle to your feet only to encounter more assailants intent on finishing the job. To your shock, you handle the hitmen with the killing skills of a professional - before heading to the bank in search of any shred of information about your lost identity and your involvement in the President's murder.

### what's new

| | |
|---|---|
| Age of Mythology: The Titans Exp PC | $34.95 |
| 1914 The Great War PC | $44.95 |
| C&C Generals: Zero Hour PC | $29.95 |
| UFO Aftermath | $39.95 |
| Greyhawk: The Temple of Elem Evil PC | $48.95 |
| The Sims Double Deluxe PC | $44.95 |
| WarCraft III Battle Chest PC | $44.95 |
| Medal of Honor Team Assault PC | $19.95 |

### hot titles

| | |
|---|---|
| Halo PC | $48.95 |
| Doom III CD | $48.95 |
| World of WarCraft Multiplayer Online PC | $49.95 |
| Warlords IV: Heroes of Etheria PC | $39.95 |
| Half-Life 2 PC | $44.95 |
| All Amer: 82nd Airborne Normandy/Seq | $44.95 |
| Lock On: Modern Air Combat PC | $39.95 |
| Half-Life CS: Condition Zero PC | $39.95 |

### coming soon

| | |
|---|---|
| Cypher - Sequel to Traitors Gate PC | $29.95 |
| Schizm 2: Myster Journey II Cham PC | $29.95 |
| Combat Flight Sim 3 Add-On PC | $29.95 |
| Squad Assault Add-On: BOB PC | $29.95 |
| Kohan: Kings of War PC | $39.95 |
| Lords of EverQuest PC | $48.95 |
| Dark Age of Camelot: Trials of Atl PC | $34.95 |
| Max Payne 2 PC | $48.95 |

### bargain bin

| | |
|---|---|
| Homeworld PC | $9.95 |
| Crimson Skies PC | $9.95 |
| Broken Sword I: Shad of the Templar PC | $9.95 |
| Panzer General 2 W95 CD | $9.95 |
| Giants: Citizen Kabuto PC | $9.95 |
| Pharaoh PC | $9.95 |
| Cutthroats: Terror on the High Seas PC | $9.95 |
| Requiem: Avenging Angel PC | $9.95 |

## ps2




### Final Fantasy x-2
Square Enix

**$49.95**

Final Fantasy X-2 is the first sequel in the long respected series. While keeping to series traditions, the sequel stays fresh with several new elements. Among them, the reintroduction of the ATB (active time battle) system accelerates the pace and excitement of battles. Final Fantasy X-2 is also the first mission-based Final Fantasy, allowing for non-linear gameplay and features new and unique job classes, which provide diverse looks for the leading female characters and an enhanced character development system.

| | |
|---|---|
| Final Fantasy XI | 52.95 |
| Hard Drive | 99.95 |
| Gran Turismo 4 | 49.95 |
| Final Fantasy XII | 49.95 |
| Starcraft Ghost | 49.95 |
| Tomb Raider Movie | 49.95 |
| Batman Dark Tomorrow | 49.95 |
| Battle Engine Aquila | 49.95 |
| Final Fantasy X-2 | 49.95 |
| NFL Blitz Pro | 42.95 |
| WWE Smackdown 5: Here Comes the Pain! | 49.95 |
| Evo Rally | 49.95 |
| Navy SEALS 2 (SOCOM 2) | 49.95 |
| Warhammer 40K: Fire Warrior | 49.95 |
| Baldurs Gate: Dark Alliance 2 | 49.95 |
| Demon Warrior | 49.95 |
| Castlevania: Lament of Innocence | 49.95 |
| FIFA Soccer 2004 | 49.95 |
| Air Force Delta Strike | 49.95 |
| Dragon Ball Z:Budokai 2 | 49.95 |

## xbox




### Grand Theft Auto 3 & Vice City
Rockstar Games

**$49.95**

The Grand Theft Auto Xbox™ collection double-pack is coming to North American shelves on November 5, 2003. The award-winning Grand Theft Auto 3 and Grand Theft Auto: Vice City together in one collectible release, both for the first time on the Xbox™ video game system from Microsoft.

| | |
|---|---|
| Starcraft Ghost | 49.95 |
| XIII | 49.95 |
| Falcone: Into the Maelstrom | 49.95 |
| Barbarian | 49.95 |
| Batman Dark Tomorrow | 49.95 |
| Pro Race Driver (TOCA) | 49.95 |
| Fable | 49.95 |
| PsychoNauts | 49.95 |
| Need for Speed: Underground | 49.95 |
| Kameo Elements of Power | 49.95 |
| Unreal II: The Awakening | 49.95 |
| Amped: Freestyle Snowboarding 2 | 49.95 |
| James Bond 007: Everything or Nothing | 49.95 |
| Pilot Down | 34.95 |
| Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines | 49.95 |
| Secret Weapons Over Normandy | 49.95 |
| Star Wars Jedi Knight: Jedi Academy | 49.95 |
| Broken Sword | 49.95 |
| Armed & Dangerous | 49.95 |
| DarkBlack | 49.95 |

## gamecube nintendo




### Star Wars Rebel Strike: Rogue Squadron III
Lucas Arts

**$49.95**

To save Luke, Wedge, Han, Chewie and Leia from Darth Vader and his Imperial forces, you'll have to master X-wings, B-wings, speeder bikes, AT-STs, and tauntauns. In this return to the classic Star Wars trilogy, Rebel Strike includes new multiplayer modes with the entire Rogue Leader game in co-op, endurance, capture-the-base and dogfights.

| | |
|---|---|
| Mario Tennis | 49.95 |
| Raven Blade | 49.95 |
| Starcraft Ghost | 49.95 |
| Star Wars Rogue Leader Rebel Strike | 49.95 |
| Barbie Treasures in Time | 49.95 |
| Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles | 49.95 |
| 1080 Snowboarding 2: Avalanche | 49.95 |
| TANKERS:Smoking Barrels | 49.95 |
| FIFA Soccer 2004 | 49.95 |
| The Hobbit | 49.95 |
| Need for Speed: Underground | 49.95 |
| Viewtiful Joe | 49.95 |
| James Bond 007: Everything or Nothing | 49.95 |
| Metal Arms: Glitch in the System | 49.95 |
| Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines | 49.95 |
| Muppets Party Cruise | 44.95 |
| DarkBlack | 49.95 |
| Go Go! Hypergrind | 49.95 |
| Gotcha Force | 49.95 |
| Harry Potter & Sorceror's Stone | 49.95 |

## gameboy advance




### Harvest Moon Friends
Natsume

**$32.95**

Harvest Moon: Friends of Mineral Town is the most advanced Harvest Moon for a handheld to date! All the elements that fans have grown to love in the Harvest Moon series are all in Harvest Moon: Friends of Mineral Town! Tons of vegetables to plant and harvest, raise different animals, marry the woman of your dreams and start a family, create your own personal adventure!

| | |
|---|---|
| Super Mario Advance 4 | 39.95 |
| Pokemon Advance | 39.95 |
| Barbarian | 39.95 |
| RoboCop | 39.95 |
| Baldur's Gate:Dark Alliance | 34.95 |
| Double Dragon Advance | 38.95 |
| Mega Man Zero 2 | 32.95 |
| Mario Golf | 36.95 |
| James Bond 007: Everything or Nothing | 38.95 |
| Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines | 34.95 |
| River City: Ransom Ex | 39.95 |
| Fire Emblem 2 | 34.95 |
| Yu Gi Oh Sacred Cards | 39.95 |
| FIFA Soccer 2004 | 38.95 |
| Froggers Journey: Forgotten Relic | 38.95 |
| Cat in the Hat | 32.95 |
| Crash Nitro Kart | 32.95 |
| Medal of Honor Infiltrator | 29.95 |
| Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup | 38.95 |
| Prince of Persia: Sands of Time | 32.95 |

# CHIPS & BITS

CHIPS & BITS

PO Box 234 • Dept. 11410 • 2520 VT Rte. 100N • Rochester, VT 05767 • INT'L 802.767.3033 • FAX 802.767.3382 • US 800.699.GAME (4263)

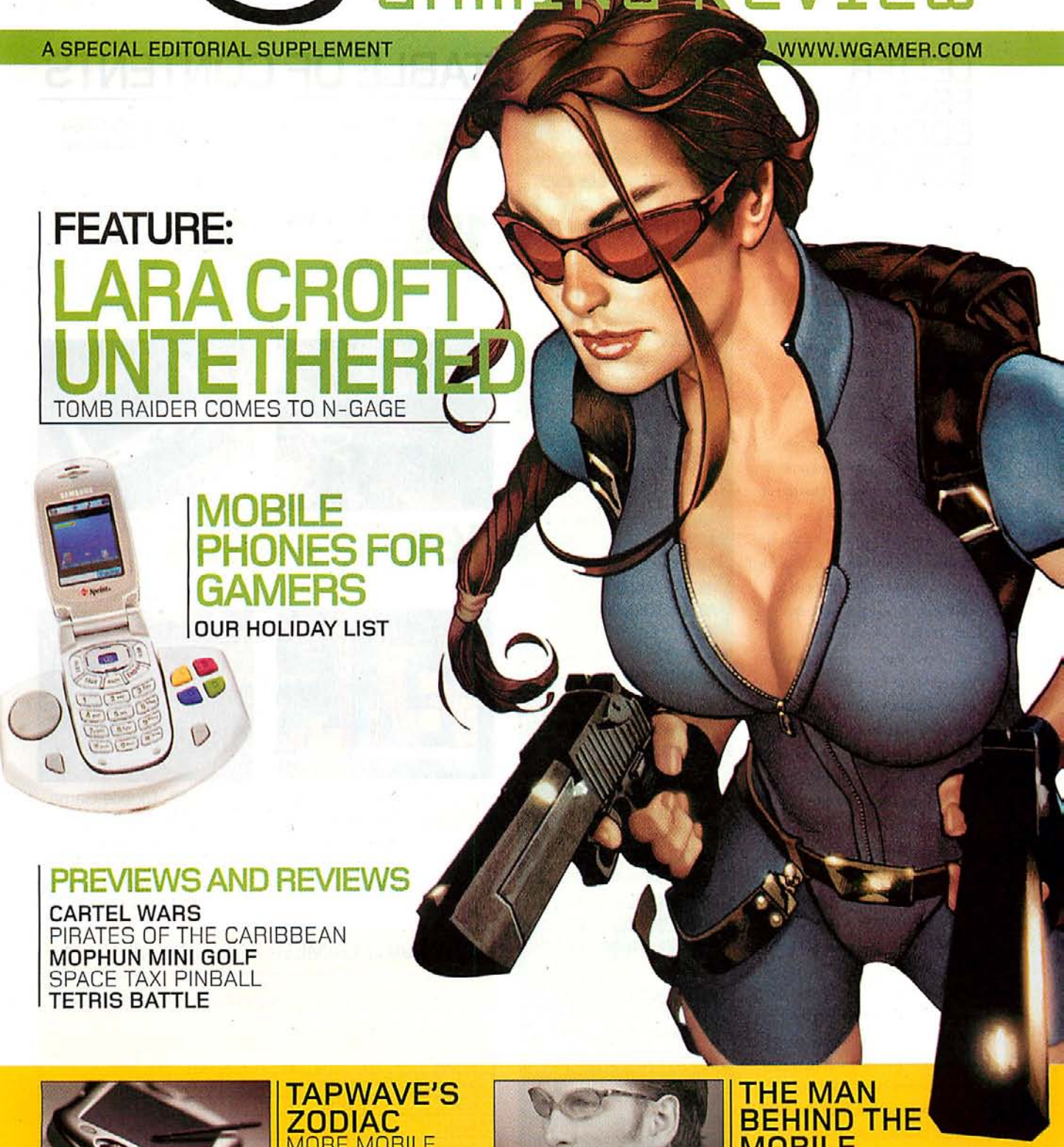
Source Code 11512

"xXx" © 2002 Revolution Studios, Inc. All Rights Reserved. "Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle" © 2003 Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. All Rights Reserved. "Q*Bert" © 2003 Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. All Rights Reserved. "S.W.A.T." © 2003 Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. All Rights Reserved. © 2003 Sony Pictures Digital Inc. All Rights Reserved.

# WIRELESS GAMING REVIEW

A SPECIAL EDITORIAL SUPPLEMENT

WWW.WGAMER.COM



## FEATURE:

# LARA CROFT UNTETHERED

TOMB RAIDER COMES TO N-GAGE



## MOBILE PHONES FOR GAMERS

OUR HOLIDAY LIST

## PREVIEWS AND REVIEWS

**CARTEL WARS**
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
**MOPHUN MINI GOLF**
SPACE TAXI PINBALL
**TETRIS BATTLE**



## TAPWAVE'S ZODIAC

MORE MOBILE MEDIA!



## THE MAN BEHIND THE MOBILE MAGIC

WIRELESS GAMING REVIEW

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR
BY MATTHEW BELLOWS

Welcome to Issue 3 of *Wireless Gaming Review* in *EGM* and *CGW*! By the time you read this, Nokia's N-Gage will be on sale everywhere, and TapWave's Zodiac will be available for order on the Web. Both are big developments. Nokia's launch is arguably the biggest event the handheld sector of the videogame world has ever seen.

As might be expected from two companies new to the videogame world, however, the weeks leading up to both platform launches were pretty rocky. At press time, neither Nokia nor TapWave could provide final builds for most of the games they planned to have ready at launch. We've seen what N-Gage Arena can do (http://www.wgamer.com/articles/ngage_arena.php), but only for *Pandemonium*. Nokia has been promising much more.

Over the next eight pages, we cover some of the best U.S. mobile games and phones. We talk with the guy who added the special mobile sauce to *Tomb Raider*, *Tony Hawk*, and *Pandemonium*. We get an early peek at Zodiac, the first Palm/Bluetooth videogame platform. And we review some of the coolest new mobile games available.

But for up-to-the-minute news on N-Gage, Zodiac, and the world of wireless games, you'll have to go to our website: www.wgamer.com. And when you read our N-Gage and Zodiac coverage here, keep in mind that the people behind these platforms are new to gaming, and it might show for a bit.

## ABOUT THIS SECTION

*Wireless Gaming Review* in *EGM* and *CGW* is produced by WGR Media to bring you news, reviews, and previews for the world of wireless games. Our editorial approach is simple: We write about the best of the best. There's a lot of junk out there—we don't want you to buy it. We do want to hear what you think, though, so please e-mail questions, comments, or advertising inquiries to Matthew Bellows at matthew@wgamer.com.

## ABOUT THE COVER

Cover Art by Adam Hughes. Adam is represented by Top Cow (www.topcow.com). Top Cow is Marc Silvestri, Matt Hawkins, and a whole slew of megatalented individuals, all obsessed with putting out the coolest comic books on the market.

## CONTRIBUTORS

Big thanks to everyone who made this section happen, especially Justin Hall (www.links.net); Cashman Andrus, technology editor; Avery Score, games editor; Amy Monaghan, copy editor; Jason Babler, lead designer; and Anne Marie Miguel, special ops.

The *Wireless Gaming Review* supplement to *Electronic Gaming Monthly* and *Computer Gaming World* is published four times per year (March, June, September, and December). For advertising information, please contact matthew@wgamer.com.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


**156** The page you're reading

**158** *WGR*'s Mobile Phone Buying Guide

**158** If You Can Wait: Rumored Phones for the U.S.

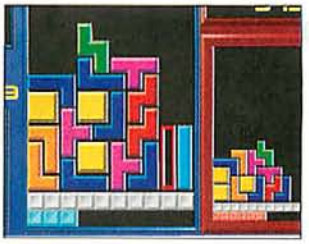
**162** Lara, Tony, and Nikki Untethered: The Adrian Sack Interview





**164** Lead Review: *Tomb Raider* on N-Gage

**166** TapWave's Zodiac: Remote Control for Mobile Media





**167** Mobile Game Previews: *Space Taxi Pinball, Tetris Battle*

**168** Mobile Game Reviews: *Cartel Wars, Mophun Mini Golf, Pirates of the Caribbean*


## HOW MANY GAMES? AND HOW MUCH?*

Average prices for mobile games and number of games per carrier

| CARRIER | 30 DAYS | 60 DAYS | UNLIMITED | NO. GAMES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| AT&T | $2.74 | $4.27 | $4.19 | 301 |
| Sprint | $2.20 | $2.97 | $3.65 | 179 |
| Cingular | | | $3.97 | 166 |
| Verizon | $2.33 | | $5.14 | 142 |
| Alltel | $2.16 | | $4.69 | 124 |
| Nextel | | | $5.49 | 91 |
| T-Mobile USA | | | $4.28 | 35 |

* as of August 2003
Source: *WGR*'s Wireless Content Tracking Service

This is where
I tried my best moves
on Rebecca.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER








Tony Hawk's Pro Skater® now on N-Gage. Skate as Tony Hawk and nine top pros through vert courses full of half-pipes and street courses full of rails and perils. Experience the revolution in online mobile gaming with N-Gage™ Arena. Online features: Shadow Gaming, Tips and Hints, Director's Cut. **n-gage.com**

N·GAGE NOKIA

anyone anywhere

EB GAMES GameStop

ACTIVISION. NEVERSOFT idea works 3D! N·GAGE ARENA

Copyright © 2003 Nokia. All rights reserved. Nokia and N-Gage are registered trademarks of Nokia Corporation. Many features and mobile services are network-dependent and require network support. Some networks have limitations that affect how you can use phone features. Contact your service provider about feature support and availability. Pro Skater is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc., and its affiliates. Tony Hawk is a trademark of Tony Hawk. Other company names mentioned herein may be trademarks or trade names of their respective owners.

WIRELESS GAMING REVIEW

# WGR'S MOBILE PHONE BUYING GUIDE

BY CASHMAN ANDRUS

**At a loss for what to ask for this holiday season? Contract (finally) up? Or are you just ready for a new toy? Don't settle for a lame phone—you can do better. To help, we've picked out the two best options from each carrier. Now you'll know what to game on.**

Prices will vary depending on carrier promotions, where you live, and the ferocity of your bargaining skills, so we can't tell you exactly how much these phones will cost when you go shopping. But you can be sure that they're all good choices for both talking and playing.




## AT&T

FIRST CLASS:

### NOKIA 3650

Yeah, it's on the large side and the keypad is whack, but the screen is awesome and the speedy processor means that games tuned for the 3650 are consistently slicker than the same titles on other phones. In fact, this is almost exactly the same hardware used on N-Gage. While it can't actually run N-Gage ROMs, it does pretty much everything else and includes a camera, too.

http://wgamer.com/phone-52



ECONOMY:

### MOTOROLA T721

Motorola's T720 was the flagship phone when AT&T launched its downloadable-games service last year. The T721 is the same phone (with a slightly different faceplate), so you're basically getting last year's technology. On the plus side, there are a staggering number of games available.

http://wgamer.com/phone-150




## CINGULAR

FIRST CLASS:

### SONY ERICSSON T616

Sony Ericsson's top-of-the-line phone manages to cram an amazing amount of stuff into a stylish little package. In addition to a camera, large color screen, infrared, and Bluetooth, there is support for not one, but two downloadable application platforms: J2ME and Mophun, which should keep you covered for games (at least until next year...).

http://wgamer.com/phone-130




ECONOMY:

### NOKIA 3595

Just the basics, but it's very well done. This phone is solid but not clunky, pleasant but not flashy, and it doesn't bother with the extra features most people never use. Sound dull? It would be if it didn't also come with a color screen, support for hundreds of J2ME games, and a price tag almost anyone can stomach.

http://wgamer.com/phone-144

## IF YOU CAN WAIT

PHONES IN THE PIPELINE – HOT OFF THE RUMOR MILL

BY CASHMAN ANDRUS

New phones aren't usually the best-kept secrets—from trade-show-booth workers to beta testers to the FCC, a lot of people know about new phones in advance. We've put our ears to the ground to find out what's coming. All of these phones should appear around the end of the year, but no dates were confirmed at press time.



### NOKIA 3200

High-end features move into the mass market, plus you can draw, paint, or print your own unique faceplates.

### NEC 525

Wish you could get your hands on the same phones the Japanese get? Well, here's one—sort of. This phone adds a built-in camera to the dedicated DoJa processor in its predecessor, the 515, and could appear on AT&T any day now.

## SPRINT



FIRST CLASS:
### SAMSUNG VGA 1000

Yes, it has the impressive list of features we've come to expect from a Sprint Vision phone—big color screen, polyphonic sound, solid J2ME game support—but this clamshell phone also offers support for a clip-on gamepad accessory. There's a sophisticated setup for the integrated camera: electronic flash, digital zoom, multishot mode, and editing options.

http://wgamer.com/phone-157



ECONOMY:
### SANYO SCP-8100

Compared to the other Economy phones, this one feels a lot more like the top of the line—a beautiful screen, quality feel, and excellent gameplay features will keep you traveling in style. Unfortunately, you still have to shell out a few beans, even with a new contract, but you get more than your money's worth.

http://wgamer.com/phone-137

## T-MOBILE




FIRST CLASS:
### NOKIA 6610

One of Nokia's first color phones, the 6610 was a rare and expensive item just a few months ago. Though it's been surpassed technologically, it is still a good all-around choice. The size and shape are pocket friendly, the features are good, and the build quality is very solid.

http://wgamer.com/phone-6




ECONOMY:
### SONY ERICSSON T300

With Mophun game support, a color screen, and simultaneous key-press support, some surprisingly good games are available on this phone. This is the handset that blazed a new trail for Sony Ericsson's mainstream line. Several of the newer models are essentially this phone using different plastics, so you can pick your favorite or maybe save a few bucks by sticking with the original.

http://wgamer.com/phone-22

## VERIZON



FIRST CLASS:
### LG VX6000

From its curvy silhouette to the extracrisp color status screen, this phone is a thing of beauty. It's got brains and brawn to back it up, too, with cutting-edge BREW 2.0 support to run the latest games from Verizon's Get It Now service, a built-in camera, and all the features you'd expect from a top-shelf phone.

http://wgamer.com/phone-142



ECONOMY:
### LG VX4400

It's a bit of an ugly duckling compared to its sister phone, but the VX4400 still quacks with the best of them. You give up the camera and some of the sleekness, but you keep some dollars in your wallet. And because it's been around longer, there are more games available—a perfect use for all the money you just saved.

http://wgamer.com/phone-89



### SONY ERICSSON Z600

Sony Ericsson's new top of the line is finally a flip phone. It also has more integrated features than anything you can buy yet, and a gamepad accessory that supports simultaneous key presses.




### NOKIA 6600

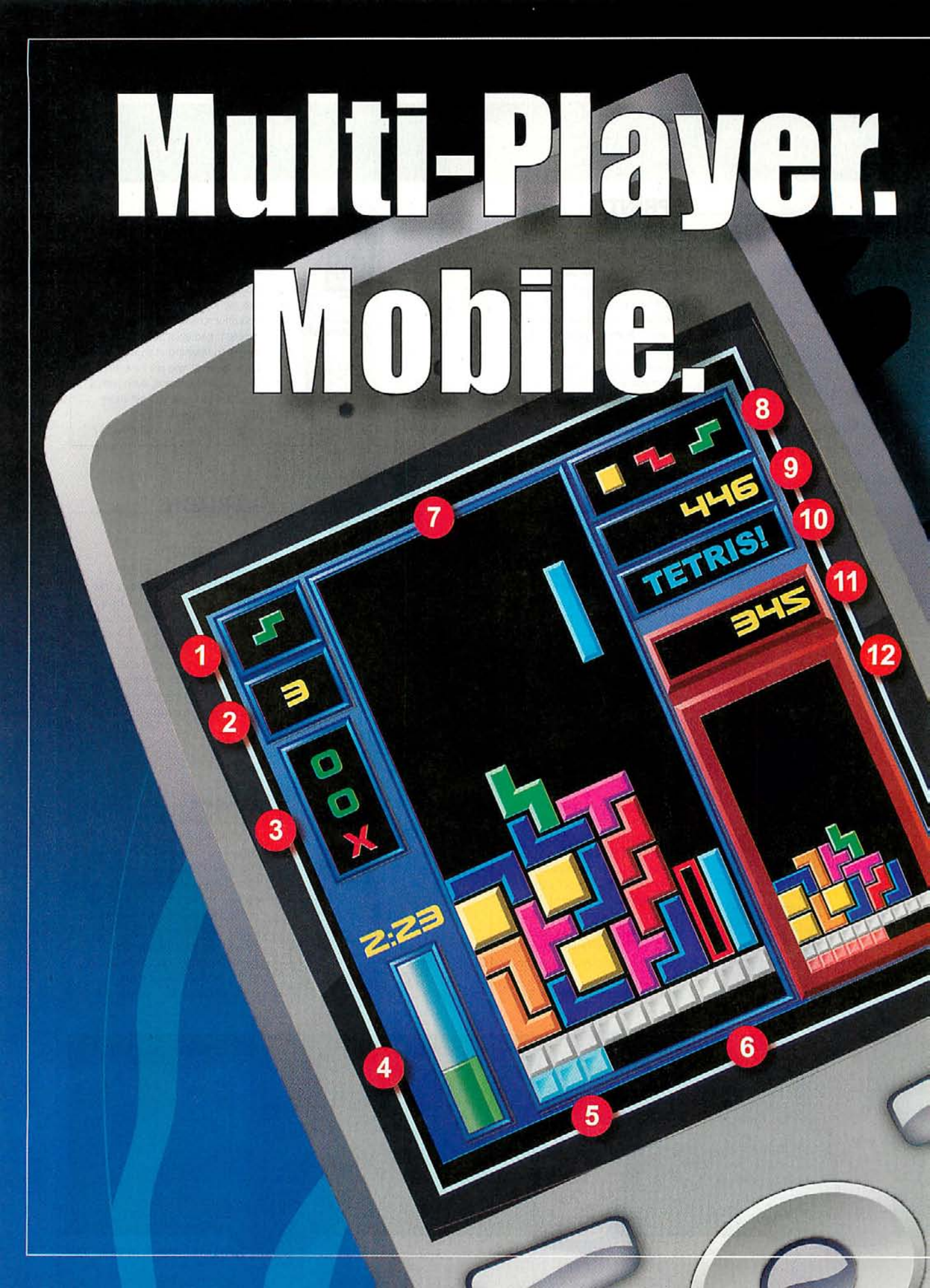
The successor to the 3650, this phone will be smaller, lighter, and more refined. Bonus: finally, a usable keypad!




### MOTOROLA V600

Do you like Motorola's style but wish the T720 would finally stop getting rereleased as though it were a new phone? Relief is here. Quad band, integrated camera, and all the rest.

# Multi-Player. Mobile.



# TETRIS® BATTLE

## PLAY THE BEST IN THE WORLD

1. Hold Piece
2. Player Rank *New Feature!*
3. Win / Loss Record *New Feature!*
4. Timer
5. Attack Meter *New Feature!*
6. Garbage Indicator *New Feature!*
7. Player 1 Matrix
8. Piece Next Queue
9. Player 1 Score
10. Message Window
11. Player 2 Score *New Feature!*
12. Player 2 Matrix *New Feature!*



Tetris



Tetris Cascade



Blue Blocks



Video Poker

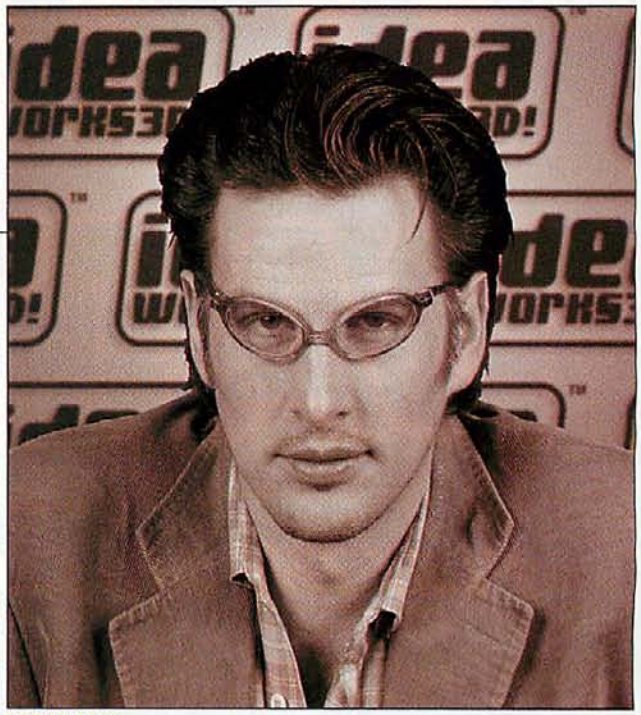
For more information, go to www.bluelavawireless.com

Tetris® ; ©Elorg 1987-2003. All Rights Reserved. Tetris logo by Roger Dean; ©The Tetris Company 1997. All Rights Reserved. Original concept and design by Alexey Pajitnov. Tetris licensed to The Tetris Company and sublicensed to Blue Lava Wireless. © 2002 Blue Lava Wireless. All Right reserved.

WIRELESS GAMING REVIEW

# LARA, TONY, AND NIKKI UNTETHERED

## Adrian Sack, Ideaworks3D's main man, talks about the mobilization and revitalization of our favorite N-Gage characters



ADRIAN SACK

**WGR:** You've got 500 words with America's top gamers, Adrian. How do you want to start?

**Adrian:** How about "packet-switched multiplayer wireless network latency mitigation technology?" OK, scratch that. I guess I'd like to say that mobile gaming is finally getting interesting. With N-Gage and other stuff coming out, we are worlds away from the games your sister has on her phone. The GBA SP is very slick, but essentially, it's just a shrunk-down version of a late-'80s home console. The networked capabilities of N-Gage make it potentially very significant.

**WGR:** But mobile titles—even N-Gage titles—still aren't up to platform standards.

**Adrian:** Depends on what you mean. It's not like a PC, but the graphics and the sound on N-Gage are much better than what we've been seeing on handhelds. When a game is done properly, it's like a PlayStation that you can carry around. PS1 is the benchmark for us, and our technology on N-Gage is running at about 75 percent to 80 percent of a PS1's performance. On *Tony Hawk*, we get 24 to 25 frames per second while mixing two channels of event sound, plus just-under-CD-quality music. I wouldn't pretend that the N-Gage is the messiah of handheld gaming, but it does have massive potential.

**WGR:** What did you guys add to *Tomb Raider*, *Tony Hawk*, and *Pandemonium* to make them more than just PlayStation ports?

**Adrian:** Well, the network stuff is the sexiest. All of our games use it. We've built Shadow Racing into *Tomb Raider*, which means that you can download someone else's route through a custom *TR* maze and race against them. In the original *Tomb Raider*, players never knew who was the best. Now we can find out. We've also contextualized all the *TR* strategy guides, so if you are stuck someplace, you can pull a video solution off the network.

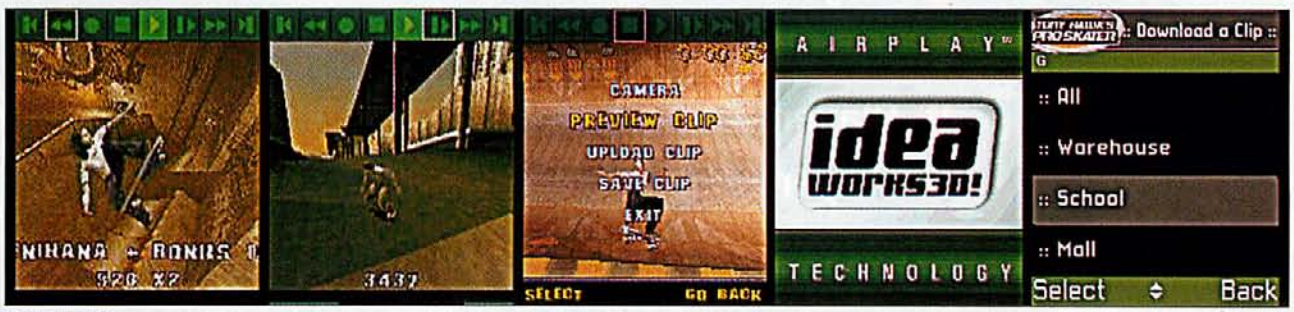
With *Tony Hawk*, we focused on Bluetooth, so you can have races, graffiti competitions and tag. Nokia has big plans for *Tony Hawk* during the launch, but I can't talk about that. Not even to you. It's our ambition to do *Tony* in real time over GPRS, but that's still in the works.

Both Lara and Tony have some pretty cool built-in movie-editing features, so you can finish a level or pull some new stunt, change camera angles and zooms, and then upload the movie to N-Gage Arena servers for all your friends to see. We're just transmitting game-state and animation data when you do that, so the actual uploads are very small. No big surprises on your phone bill.

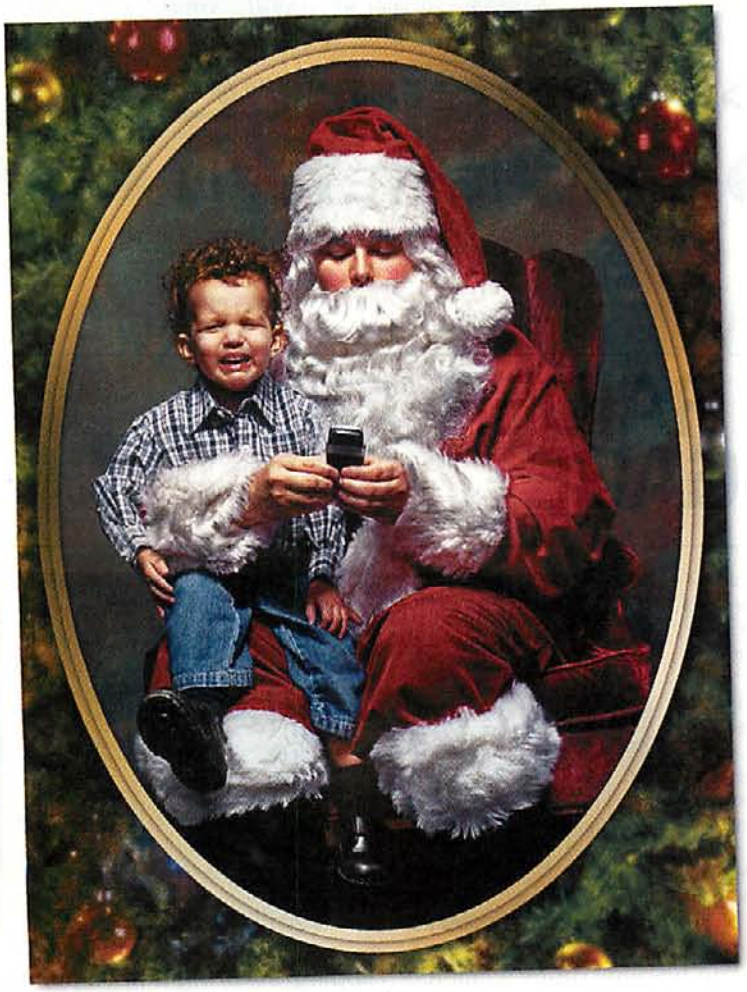
On *Pandemonium*, there's head-to-head Bluetooth coin-gathering races, or you can team up to beat a level. In the middle of a game, you can access the network and buy a power-up for a couple cents, so the races get pretty hilarious. And you can download ghosts from our servers to race against other people.

**WGR:** All of this is dependent on getting the servers up and accessible for launch. Will everything be in place by October 7? And will it scale?

**Adrian:** We've tested again and again, and it works. Nokia has the final word on availability, but it's looking good. And there's a lot of new technology for mobile gaming on the way. Black-box stuff is being developed in an evacuated hyperbaric chamber at our skunkworks lab. There's stuff early next year that I can't talk about, and then there's even cooler tech aimed at the end of 2004. The next few years should be pretty exciting for all of us.



TONY HAWK



Any time, any place.






Get all the hot games on your wireless phone, whenever and wherever you want them. Cingular has the widest selection of games ready for download, like Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell™ and Cingular's NCAA® Football. All with full animation and full color. Plus, the best devices for wireless gaming, including the Motorola T720 and Nokia 3300. Titles range from $.99 to $5.99. Get in the game today at www.cingular.com/games.

cingular
fits you best℠

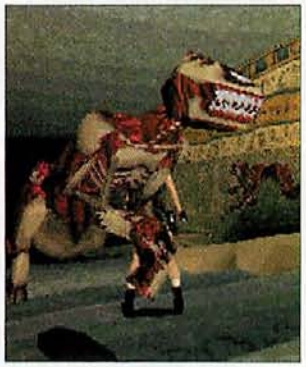
Availability of game titles varies by phone model and downloadable games are not available on all phone models. Wireless Internet and Text Message Service are required to receive games and usage may be charged, depending on your plan. Cingular Wireless is not responsible for adverse effects of downloaded content. See www.mywirelesswindow.com/terms for terms and conditions. Cingular Wireless is an Official NCAA® Corporate Champion. Games provided by independent developers. FOX Sports is a registered trademark of FOX Interactive Television, LLC. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Splinter Cell © 2002 Gameloft under license by Ubi Soft Entertainment. Splinter Cell is a trademark of Ubi Soft Entertainment in the US and/or other countries. Prince of Persia under license by Ubi Soft Entertainment S.A. Based on Jordan Mechner's Prince of Persia. © 1989 Jordan Mechner. All rights reserved. Prince of Persia is a registered trademark of Jordan Mechner. Scooby-Doo™ Jeepers Creepers published by dbi Digital Bridges Ltd © 2003 Scooby-Doo and related characters are trademarks of Hanna Barbera Productions, Inc. Cartoon Network and Logo™ & © 2003 Cartoon Network. © 2003 TBS, Inc. An AOL Time Warner Company. Top Gun™ and © 2003 Paramount Pictures, all rights reserved. Italian Job™ and © 2003 Paramount Pictures, all rights reserved. Elder Scrolls © 2002 Bethesda Software LLC, a ZeniMax Media company. MotoGP™ and © 2003 Dorna Sports, S.L. MotoGP and related logos, characters, names, and distinctive likenesses thereof are the exclusive property of Dorna Sports, S.L. and/or their respective owners. MOTOROLA and the Stylized M Logo are registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Nokia and the 3300 phone are trademarks or registered trademarks of Nokia Corporation and/or its affiliates. © 2003 Cingular Wireless LLC.

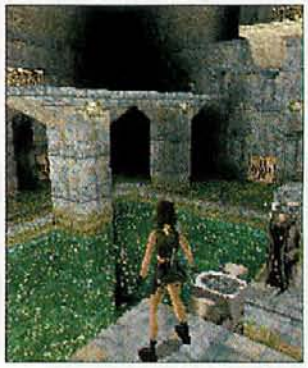
WIRELESS GAMING REVIEW

# REVIEW

# TOMB RAIDER ON N-GAGE

BY AVERY SCORE







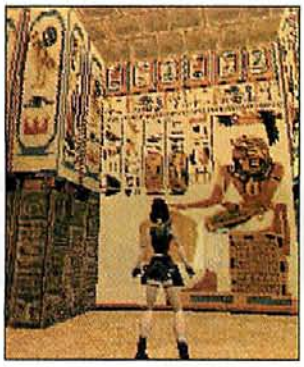
**Seven years after the original game's release, flipping, strafing and tumbling your way through the game's tortuous caverns with dual Desert Eagles blazing is still highly entertaining.**

When *Tomb Raider* first hit the shelves in November 1996, the world of videogames changed forever. Never had breasts been so beautifully realized in a videogame. Although zaftig females had long been a staple of the gaming world, we were previously restricted to gazing at two-dimensional, pixilated forms. Lara Croft's ponderous, protuberant, polygonal presence was a welcome novelty.

Ms. Croft, a more fetching alternative to the Italian plumbers of the world, is the progenitor of the now-cliché stiff-lipped game girl. Her instant stardom gave rise to myriad other gun-toting heavenly bodies, such as *Dino Crisis*' Regina and, more recently, *Eternal Darkness*' Alexandra Roivas. Her early games defined the 3D action-adventure, with all its strengths and pitfalls.

Now, N-Gage reminds us of everything we loved and hated about *Tomb Raider* when we played it on the first-generation, non-DualShock PlayStation. The mobile version's single-player game is nearly identical to its 20th-century forebear, retaining its predecessor's appealing graphics, its platforming elements—and its unfortunate control issues.

Yes, I said control issues. If you've ever felt nostalgic for 3D's infancy, before the advent of analog sticks, *Tomb Raider* will forever cure you. Lara, as you might expect from an impassive, stolid starlet of gaming, is extremely hard to control. The N-Gage's directional pad is a tad better than the unapologetically unergonomic abhorrence that Sony sicced on our unwitting fingertips, but that's not saying much. Additionally, an unfortunate auto-run "feature" has been added to the existing laundry list of control problems. When you tap forward on the control pad, Lara starts running and won't stop until you press backward on the pad. This further necessitates the use of the Walk key and ensures that even the simplest tasks, such as picking up a medkit, are incredibly difficult. Seven years after the original game's release, flipping, strafing, and tumbling your way through the game's tortuous caverns with dual Desert Eagles blazing is still highly entertaining—if you can master the game's complex control.

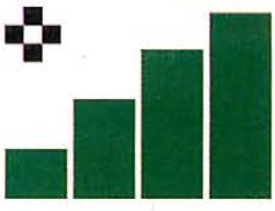




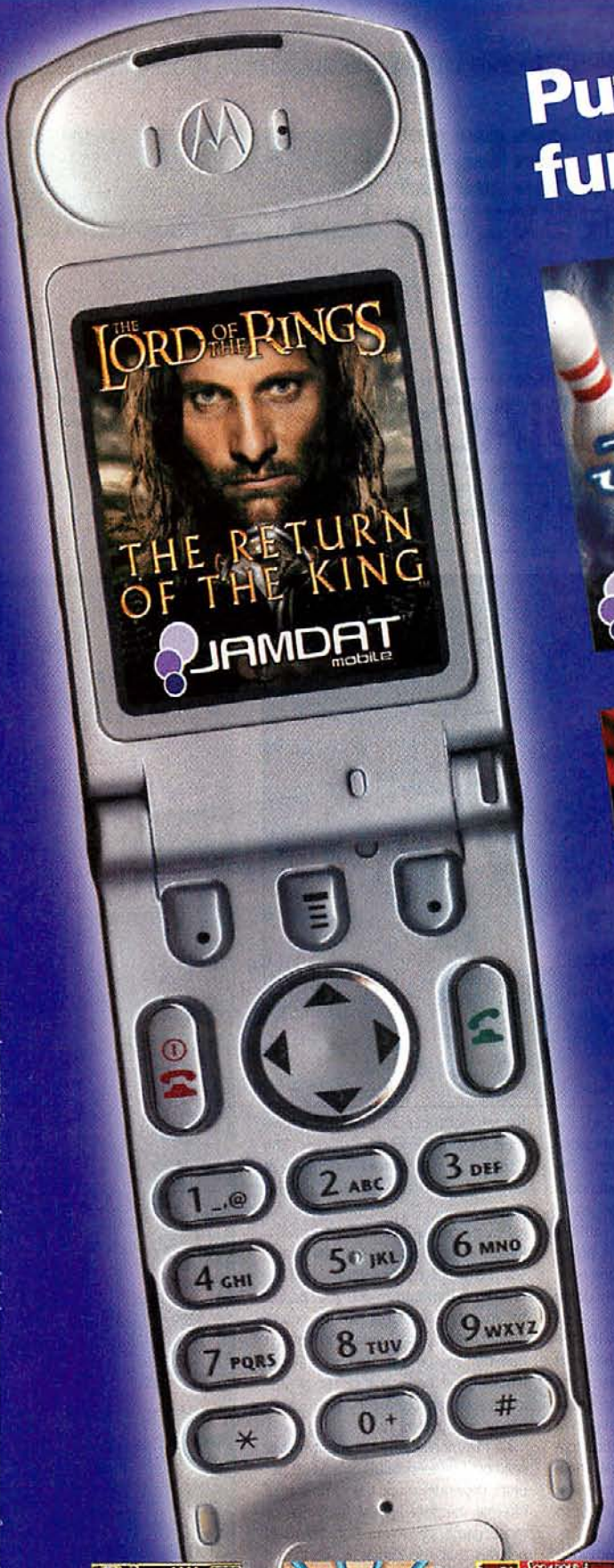
The N-Gage iteration of the game isn't a straight port. Making good on mobile's promise of connectivity, IdeaWorks 3D has gone to great lengths to ensure that *Tomb Raider* will boast a thriving multiplayer community. By far its most intriguing feature is the ability to make in-game movies and upload them to the *TR* server, where they can be viewed by other players. The easy-to-use movie tools allow you to shoot Lara from a variety of angles—and because of the way the game records the films, uploading even long recordings is only a matter of a few kilobytes. My prediction: Ineluctably, gamers will compete to record Lara in the most compromising positions. I still vividly remember the helpful suggestions of my friends when we played the original: "Dude, get her up against the wall; you get a way better look at her butt." Depraved gamers now have the ability to make Ms. Croft vamp for the camera. The fall of civilization is nigh. I truly believe that the Mycenaeans were destroyed by a similar game featuring Helen of Troy. That would explain why excavations on those legendary battlefields have proved fruitless.

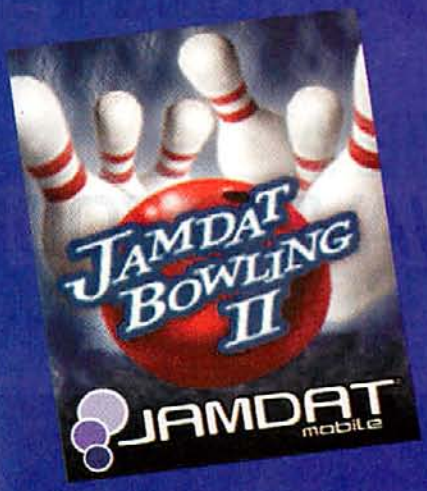
With her newfound portability and multiplayer features, Lara will make veterans swoon all over again. If you're new to *TR* games, there's no better place to start. If not...isn't love sweeter the second time around?

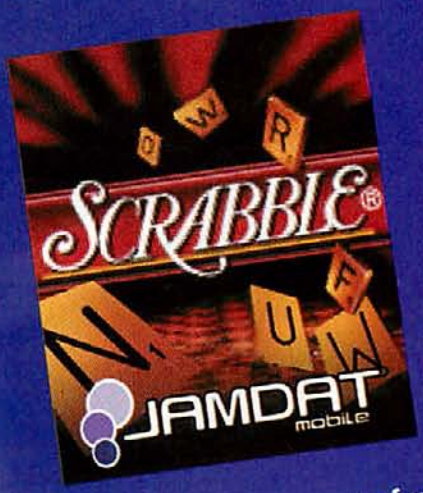
## WGAMER RATING:



# Put some major fun in your phone.



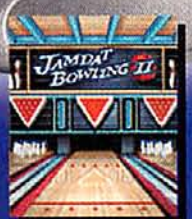




Get the most fun out of your mobile phone by putting some in. With the greatest selection of the most popular games available today, JAMDAT is your one-stop source for the best wireless games.

JAMDAT mobile









www.jamdat.com

©2003 JAMDAT Mobile Inc. JAMDAT and JAMDAT Mobile are trademarks or registered trademarks of JAMDAT Mobile Inc. All rights reserved. ©New Line Productions, Inc.™ Tolkien Enterprises llc. to New Line productions, Inc. All Rights Reserved. SCRABBLE is a trademark of Hasbro in the US and Canada and is used with permission. ©2003 Hasbro. All Rights Reserved. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners and are used with permission.

WIRELESS GAMING REVIEW

PREVIEW

# TAPWAVE'S ZODIAC: A REMOTE CONTROL FOR MOBILE MEDIA

BY JUSTIN HALL



After decades of Nintendo dominance, the handheld gaming scene will soon be flooded with competitors. Rival companies are banking on the maturation of the Game Boy audience—people in their twenties who are eager for a handheld entertainment device with more power than a GBA, and one that doesn't look like it was stolen from a 7 year old.

To attract the sophisticated gamer, TapWave has attached a larger screen, 3D graphics processing power, and an analog joystick to the guts of a Palm PDA. It's called the Zodiac, and it plays MP3s, displays digital photographs, keeps track of your contacts and appointments and lets you play *SpyHunter* or *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater*.

Most of today's digital assistants are myopically focused on mobile professionals—people for whom the calendar is the most critical part of their virtual life. Tim Twerdahl, a senior product manager at TapWave who was formerly at Palm, left Palm because he wanted to see the PDA evolve. He saw his younger friends expanding the power of their PDAs with downloaded games or goofy, fun applications. The Game Boy, Twerdahl points out, looks far too childish to appeal to many adults. But if you had a device with the power of a Palm that could be pulled out in front of coworkers, no one need ever know what you're actually doing with that stylus.

Gamers who grew up with the Game Boy will be pleased by the smart product design of the Zodiac. The analog control stick is responsive under the left thumb. TapWave has switched the Palm's orientation from vertical to a more gaming-friendly horizontal. There are a good number of buttons, including shoulder buttons, but not so many that they get in the way.

One thing the TapWave Zodiac won't be doing is communicating—at least, not over long distances. Unlike the N-Gage or other upcoming mobile gaming devices, the Zodiac has no mobile phone capacity or long-range Internet networking capacity. TapWave has left out functions that others have tried to shove into their devices. The Zodiac is meant for watching or listening to media or for playing games.

However, the Zodiac does boast a Bluetooth connection, denoted with a smart blue LED button at the top of the unit. Press that button and your Zodiac broadcasts a signal that you're available for local-area multiplayer gaming. One person can host a *Doom II* match, say, and a half-dozen players in the area can join the low-latency, in-person, multiplayer fun.

All this mobile entertainment power will cost between $300 and $400 per unit, depending on the amount of internal memory—twice the price of most game consoles. But Twerdahl believes that the Zodiac is worth the initial sticker shock because it replaces your MP3 player, digital picture frame, PDA, and Game Boy. Would I buy one? I'm still angling to keep my demo model, but if that doesn't work, I just might.

## LAUNCH TITLES FOR TAPWAVE'S ZODIAC



- Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4



- Phantom Strike



- SpyHunter



- Warfare Incorporated
- Doom II
- Galactic Realms

### BUNDLED TITLES

- Stuntcar Extreme
- AcidSolitaire

### AND "SOON AFTER" LAUNCH

- Duke Nukem Mobile
- Neverwinter Nights

# MOBILE GAME PREVIEWS

## SPACE TAXI PINBALL

Developer: Mr. Goodliving
Publisher (U.S.): Pulse Mobile Games



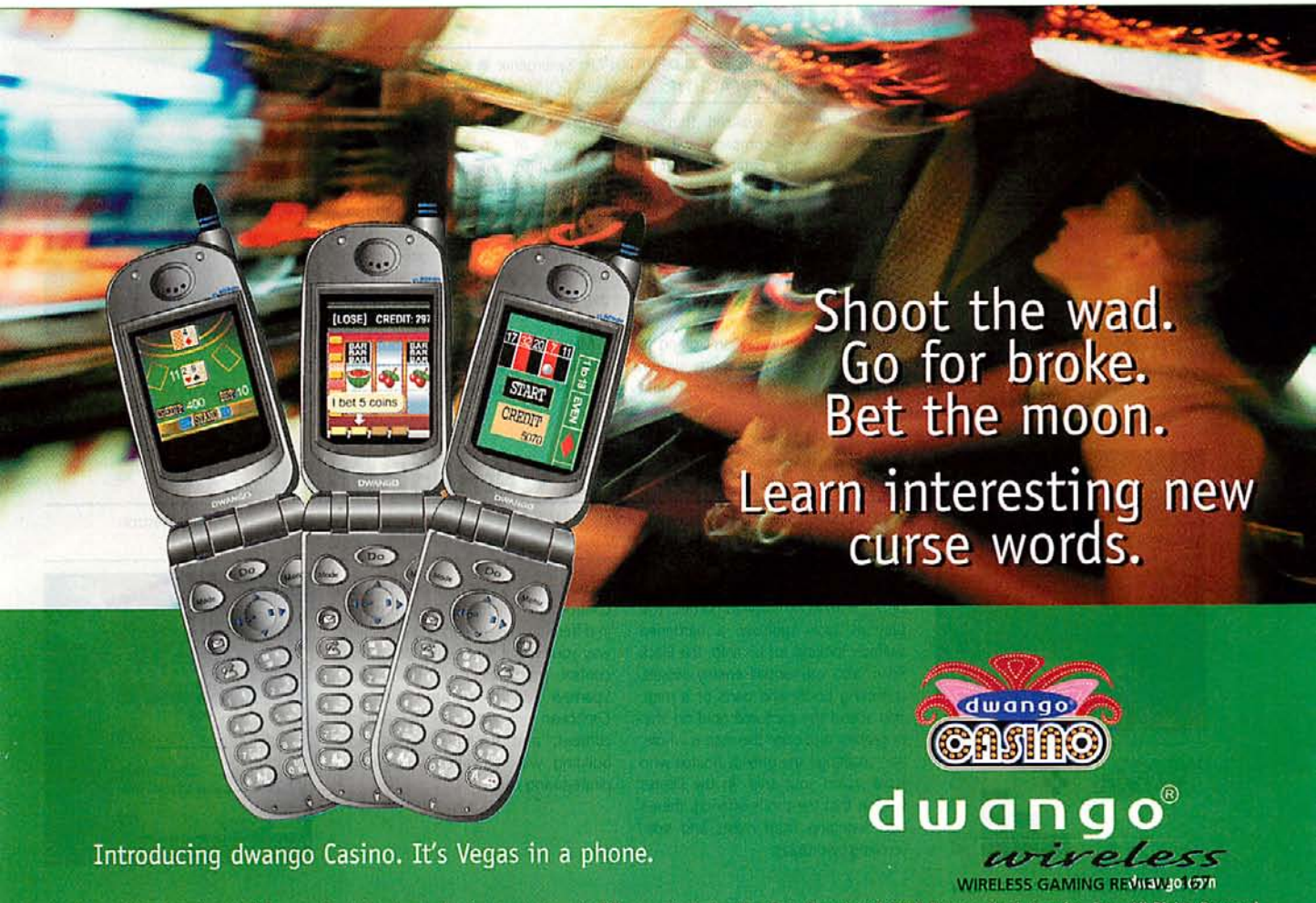

The best pinball games, real or virtual, tell a story. Or, at the very least, they pick a theme and make the gameplay directly reflect it. In *Space Taxi Pinball*, you are, not surprisingly, an intergalactic cabby serving an extraterrestrial clientele. You pick up fares by hitting an In button at the top of the table. This activates a taxi-stand indicator. Slam into the stand to pick up your client and then take him to his destination, marked by another indicator light. Or, you can completely ignore your customers in favor of loftier pursuits, like rolling your way to car upgrades and more gas. Either way, *Space Taxi Pinball* is already shaping up to be the superlative pinball game on mobile.

## TETRIS BATTLE

Developer: Blue Lava Wireless
Publisher: Blue Lava Wireless




Shadow racing isn't just for N-Gage anymore. This version of *Tetris*, designed originally to sate the hunger of Japanese mobile gamers, is coming to the rest of the world in early December. Much of it will be familiar, but the Battle part is new. The game will record your *Tetris* efforts and post them on a server. Would-be opponents will be able to download the game you posted and try to beat it. With players contributing games from the U.S., Europe, Japan, and Korea, the competition will be fierce, and Blue Lava promises Celebrity Matches, so you can finally take Britney on at her favorite game.

WIRELESS GAMING REVIEW

# WGAMER REVIEWS



## CARTEL WARS

■ **PUBLISHER:** Gameloft ■ **DEVELOPER:** Gameloft ■ **AVAILABLE ON:** Verizon
READ THE FULL REVIEW AT: **HTTP://WWW.WGAMER.COM/GAMEDIR/GAME-1759**

Without a doubt, *Cartel Wars* is the best game yet for Verizon's Motorola T720 phone. This arcade shooter makes *Ground Pounder* (reviewed in our June issue) look very last-gen. Gameloft has a reputation for putting extra effort into its titles, and *Cartel Wars* is no exception. You play as Julia, an anime-style gunner seeking to topple the brutal dictatorship of Colonel Diaz. With a bevy of weapons and power-ups at your disposal, you battle detailed zombies, lackeys, tanks, and bosses through 10 levels. Is it socially important? No. But what other mobile-phone game lets you hijack a tank? Could it be longer? Yes. But is there a better-looking, better-playing mobile shooter? We don't think so.




WGAMER RATING:



## MINI GOLF

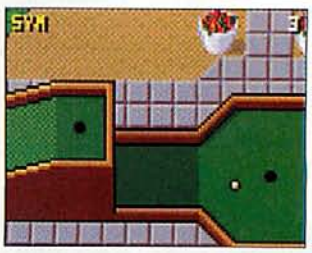
■ **PUBLISHER:** Synergenix ■ **DEVELOPER:** Synergenix ■ **AVAILABLE ON:** Cingular
READ THE FULL REVIEW AT: **HTTP://WGAMER.COM/GAMEDIR/GAME-1563**

Synergenix has realized that no sports lineup is complete without prodigious putting. Enter *Mini Golf* for Mophun phones—18 holes of multiplayer mayhem. You work the terrain, fighting your way past big obstacles and inclines, and the lowest score wins. You can challenge a friend via Bluetooth or infrared, or best A.I. opponents.

*Mini Golf*'s gameplay isn't going to flip your wig. A simple meter system determines a stroke's power and accuracy. You have to use the right amount of power to avoid overshooting, which takes skill to judge accurately.

Each hole is well designed and fun. The overhead perspective on every ninth hole is especially difficult. No windmills or giant dinosaurs here, but there are numerous potted plants. FUNKY!

*Mini Golf* isn't innovative, but one shouldn't fault a well-executed, simple concept. The game plays and looks tight. Take a cue from Happy Gilmore, and get your game face on.



WGAMER RATING:



## PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN

■ **PUBLISHER:** Walt Disney Internet Group ■ **DEVELOPER:** Flying Tiger ■ **AVAILABLE ON:** Sprint, Verizon
READ THE FULL REVIEW AT: **HTTP://WWW.WGAMER.COM/GAMEDIR/GAME-1907**

*Pirates of the Caribbean* is one of the better Hollywood-inspired games. You play as Jack Sparrow, a hardened seafarer looking for his ship, the Black Pearl. You cannonball enemy vessels, collecting booty and parts of a map. You spend the captured gold on ship upgrades, and once the map is whole, you challenge the ghostly hoards who have stolen your ship. In the Pirates version that Verizon is offering, there's also swinging from masts and side-scrolling swordplay.

The game's greatest weakness is its control. The directional keys turn you in different ways, depending on which way your vessel is pointing. But a few control problems can't keep Jack Sparrow down. *Pirates of the Caribbean* will get with its nautical combat, and its RPG-esque ship-building will reawaken your inner pirate-loving child.




WGAMER RATING:

# XIII

MOBILE GAME















**Keep your friends close And your enemies closer....**

DARGAUD

HITS

Also available on PlayStation 2, XBox, Gamecube and PC CD-ROM, whoisXIII.com

UBISOFT

...rtainment in the US and/or other countries. ©2003 UBI SOFT Entertainment. Based on the comic book series XIII ©DARGAUD-LOMBARD S.A.

Tom Clancy's SPLINTER CELL



TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL®

I alone have
the fifth freedom
I am Sam Fisher
I am a Splinter cell

skate & slam




SKATE & SLAM

Become the King
of the Asphalt !

PRINCE OF PERSIA THE SANDS OF TIME



PRINCE OF PERSIA® THE SANDS OF TIME

Master the Sands of Time
or be buried!

RAYMAN BOWLING



RAYMAN® BOWLING

Bowl a strike
with Rayman !

SIBERIAN STRIKE




SIBERIAN STRIKE

Will you be fast enough
to lead the air strike force ?

Actual screenshots

**Download** directly from your phone through your carrier's portal or at www.gameloft.com

Gameloft games are available for: (check compatibility)



Nokia 3595 | Nokia 3650 | Siemens S56 | LG 4400 | Motorola T720 | Nokia 7210

and for:
Nokia 3590
Nokia 6200
Nokia 6800
Siemens C56
LG 6000

gameloft

©2003 Gameloft. All rights reserved. Trademarks belong to their respective owners. Game features may vary according to the mobile phone. Ubi Soft Entertainment is the author of Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell.



HALF-LIFE®2

What's hotter than Half-Life 2? Playing Half-Life 2 on your PC with one of ATI's RADEON™ 9800 or RADEON™ 9600 series graphics cards. It's the best* way to experience Half-Life 2. Nothing is more immersive. Nothing is more intense. Nothing is more real. Half-Life 2 and RADEON™ are ready. Are you?

ATI's latest RADEON™ series — The preferred graphics solution for Half-Life 2.

LIVE OR DIE – EITHER WAY IT'S A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN

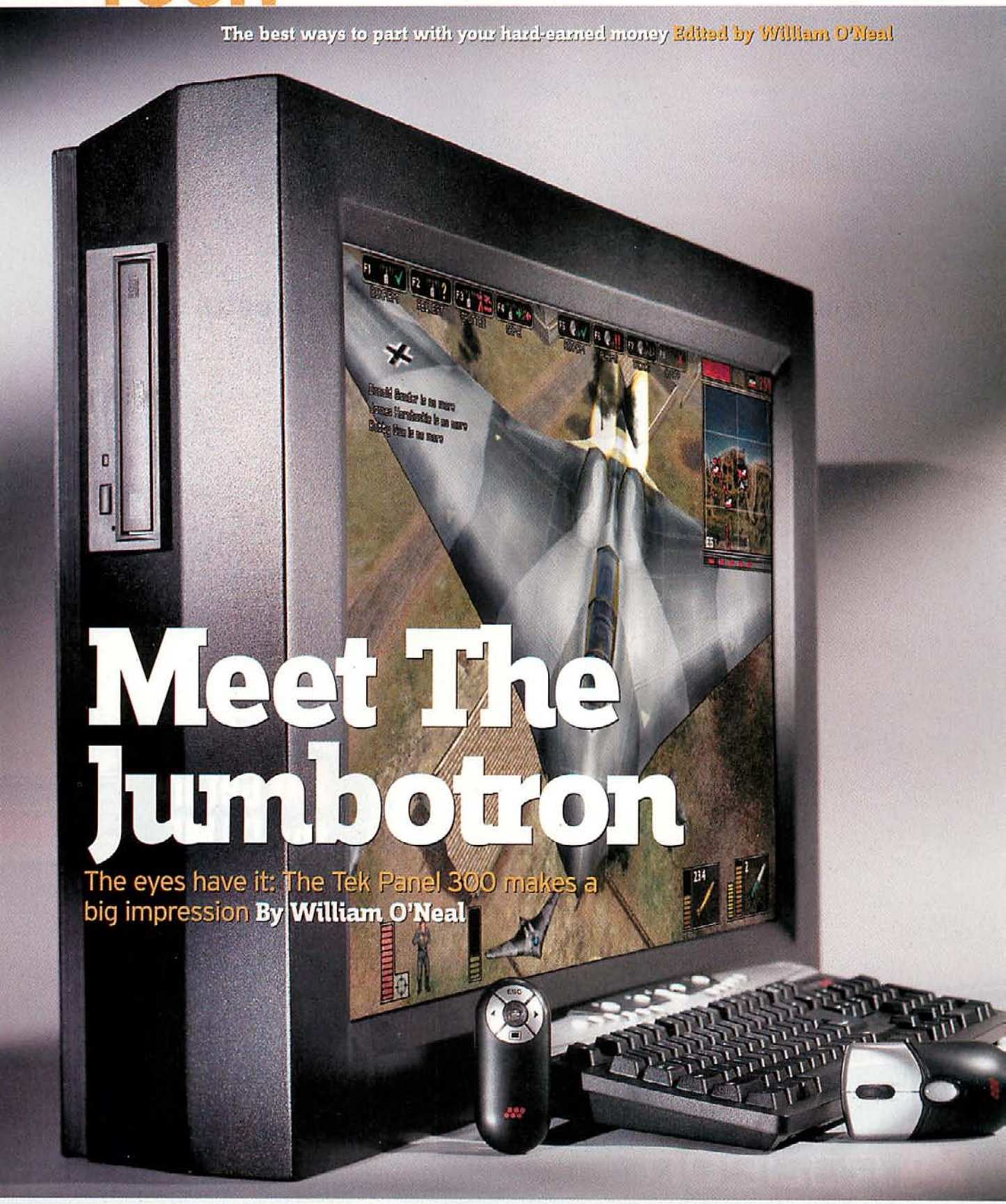



RADEON™

www.ati.com/getinthegame

Copyright 2003, ATI Technologies Inc. All rights reserved. ATI and the RADEON are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of ATI Technologies Inc. DirectX is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and other countries. Image © 2003 Valve Corporation. All rights reserved. Valve, the Lambda logo, Half Life and the Half Life logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Valve Corporation. All other company and or product names are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of their respective owners.
*ATi s RADEON 9800XT 256MB DDR compared with Nvidia Geforce FX5900Ultra 256MB DDR, tested on the following system: P4-3.2GHz CPU, Intel i875P chipset, Windows XP Professional with ATI driver v.7.93 and NVIDIA driver v45.23. Resolutions: 1600x1200 4XAA.

The best ways to part with your hard-earned money **Edited by William O'Neal**



# Meet The Jumbotron

The eyes have it: The Tek Panel 300 makes a big impression **By William O'Neal**



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARNOLD TIOSEJO

**TECH STATS**

MANUFACTURER: TEK PANEL
PRICE: $6,500

Every month, vendors call me to say they have a new PC they'd like me to evaluate. "You're gonna be blown away, Wil," they promise. "This thing has the fastest processor available, and the 256MB graphics card that we've included is the cat's pajamas." OK, no one has actually referred to ATI's or Nvidia's flagship parts as "the cat's pajamas," but you understand where I'm going with this. Every month, we're looking at updated versions of the same PCs we've seen in previous months. Which is why it's exciting when we see something innovative.

The second the Tek Panel 300 showed up at the Ziff offices, everyone had something to say about it. Comments ranged from the absurd ("Can I take that home this weekend?") to the slightly more astute ("That would be great for presentations"). If nothing else, it's quite a conversation starter.

While it looks like nothing more than a 30-inch LCD monitor, the Tek Panel 300 is in fact a complete PC that's a scant 5 inches thick. At its heart is an ASUS P4C800 Deluxe Ai series motherboard, a 3.06GHz Pentium 4 processor, 2GB of PC3200 DDR memory, a 120GB 7200 RPM IBM hard drive, and a Toshiba combo DVD-ROM/CD-RW drive. At first, I thought it must have on-board video, but this baby showed up with a 128MB ATI All-in-Wonder 9800 Pro graphics card. Since I like to tinker, I peeked inside and found that the Tek Panel 300 is essentially a thin PC case built into the back of an LCD. In other words, it's possible to replace components like the graphics card, memory, and hard drive. According to Tek Panel, however, this will void your warranty.

## BY THE NUMBERS

| MODEL | TEK PANEL 300 |
|---|---|
| Price | $6,495 |
| Operating system | Windows XP Professional Edition |
| Processor | Intel 3.06GHz Pentium 4 |
| Motherboard | ASUS P4C800 Deluxe Ai Series |
| Memory | 512MB PC3200 DDR |
| Hard drive | IBM 120GB 7200 RPM hard drive |
| Graphics processor | 128MB ATI All-in-Wonder 9800 Pro |
| Soundcard | On-board audio |
| DVD-ROM drive | Toshiba Combo DVD/CD-RW drive |
| Display | 30-inch WXGA Active Matrix TFT LCD |
| Speakers | Bose MediaMate 2.1 |
| Keyboard | VersaPoint Communicator Wireless |
| Mouse | VersaPoint Communicator Wireless |
| Miscellaneous | 8 USB 2.0 ports; S-Video output; S/PDIF output |
| Speed | 4 |
| Price | 3 |
| Stability | 3.5 |
| Support | 4 |
| Upgradeability | 3.5 |
| SCORE | 3.6 |

## The second the Tek Panel 300 showed up, everyone had something to say about it.

Since I was benchmarking a PC with an LCD monitor attached to it, testing proved a bit tricky. The Tek Panel 300 didn't like to scale to resolutions that were too far from its native 1600x1024. Some games ran at multiple resolutions (including 1600x1200), but because many didn't, we couldn't get accurate 3D GameGauge 3.0 scores at anything other than 1024x768. So, we tested the Tek Panel 300 at 1024x768 with 4x anti-aliasing and 8x anisotropic filtering turned on, and achieved a GameGauge score of 66 frames per second. While this isn't the highest number we've seen, it's adequate for playing any game that's out now, as well as the big ones coming down the pike: *Doom III* and *Half-Life 2*.

One problem LCDs typically have when playing games is a slow refresh rate that creates that horrible ghosting effect. Of course, this doesn't happen with more expensive LCDs, and the Tek Panel 300 sports a top-notch display from L.G. Philips. All the games we tested looked great at 1024x768, and a few even worked at 1280x960 and 1600x1200.

At $6,500, the Tek Panel 300 is prohibitively expensive. However, what excites me about it is what it means for the future of PCs and convergence. The inclusion of the All-in-Wonder card makes it a bona fide television, DVD player, personal video recorder, and gaming machine. As this is an early stab at the machine, my excitement for the Tek Panel 300 is tempered by a few touches I would like to have seen. It lacks FireWire ports, an issue solved by filling one of the PCI slots with a $20 add-in card. But if the machine is going to be used in a home environment, it needs USB and FireWire ports on the front and/or side (getting to the bottom of the unit is a pain).

Ultimately, Tek Panel should be lauded for going out a limb. We're eager to see the next-generation product, which will almost certainly be even cooler. Now, if only I could get the people at Tek Panel to forget they sent it to me....

**VERDICT** ★★★½☆

**A really cool upgradeable device that actually does what it was intended to do—and does it well.**



# Microsoft's Wireless Optical Desktop Elite

All I want for Kwanzaa **BY WILLIAM O'NEAL**

**TECH STATS**

MANUFACTURER: MICROSOFT
PRICE: $105

Every year about this time—August to normal people, but Kwanzaa to those of us in the magazine business—companies come out with products that, while completely unnecessary, are hella cool. Microsoft's Wireless Optical Desktop Elite is one such product.

Since most computer systems come with a keyboard and a mouse—and I would venture to guess that every single *CGW* reader has a keyboard and a mouse that work just fine—it's difficult to justify spending $100 for a new setup. And that's why Microsoft releases this stuff in time for the holidays. While celebrants of Kwanzaa are encouraged to make gifts as opposed to purchasing them, the Wireless Optical Desktop Elite is a perfect gift idea for all of you who celebrate more materialistic rituals like Christmas and Hanukkah.

The Wireless Optical Desktop Elite isn't just a rehash of last year's Wireless Optical Desktop. The new version actually rocks some fairly dope features. The keyboard takes three AA batteries and the mouse uses two AA batteries: According to Microsoft users, you can expect up to six months of battery life. Older wireless peripherals have exhibited lag times that, while not necessarily problematic, make you aware you're using a wireless product; the device falls asleep in order to save battery life, and you have to wait (a fraction of a second) for it to wake up when you're ready to use it. This new setup, however, feels like it's always on.

The mouse is contoured to fit your hand and boasts five programmable buttons as well as Microsoft's new tilt-wheel technology, which allows you to scroll vertically and horizontally. This feature is great for Web surfing and spreadsheets. I had originally hoped the left-and-right scrolling action could be programmed to do things like peek left or right in games, but no dice.

The keyboard has also undergone a facelift and now has quick-launch buttons (many are programmable) for everything from websites to multimedia functions. It also has a soft wrist rest that puts those hard plastic ones to shame. The whole setup is designed to work from up to six feet away, and the receiver can even be kept out of sight if need be.

I really like the Wireless Optical Desktop Elite, though it's tough to justify paying $100 for it. However, as OEMs pick up on it, I'd be quick to add it to a machine I was configuring.

**VERDICT** ★★★★☆

**A really cool wireless peripheral that's totally worth 100 of someone else's dollars.**



## WIL POWER

By William O'Neal

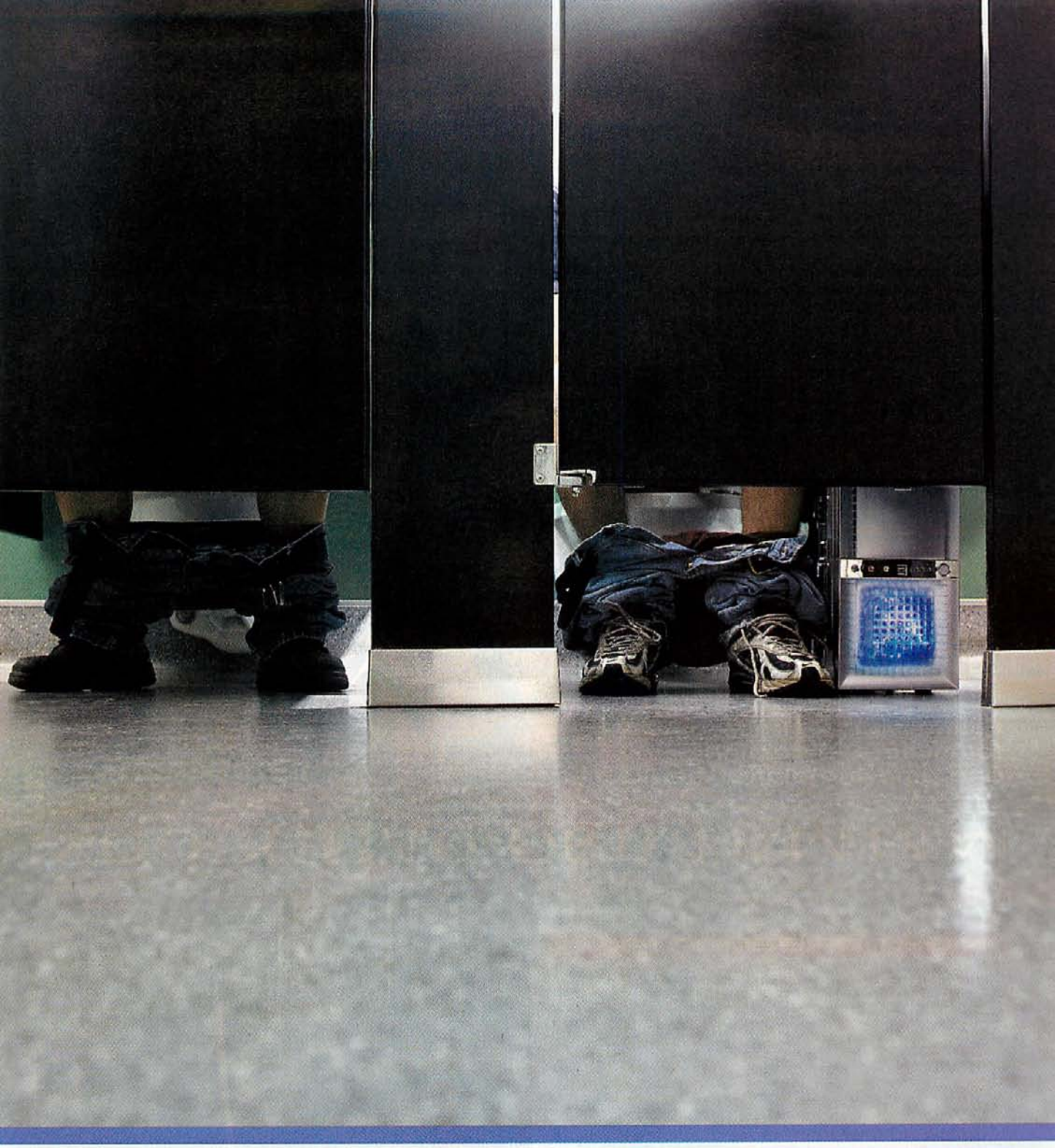
# The Tech Support Ratings Game

PCs are one of the most difficult items I have to review. Aside from measuring raw speed, rating PCs incorporates subjective criteria: Does it ship with the highest-quality components? How easy is it to set up? How good is the company's tech support? While rating the speed, component quality, and ease of setup of a particular machine is relatively simple, the notion of how to rate a company's tech support has bedeviled me for some time.

Every year, we consider doing a "Big Ass PC Tech Support" feature for which we'd buy a bunch of machines anonymously, call each of the manufacturers' tech support, and then rate them according to how long it took to get an actual human on the phone, whether or not they were able to fix the problem, and how nice they were.

You're probably thinking, "Dude, that sounds awesome. Why don't you get off your ass and do it?" The answer, of course, is money. Ziff won't give me $20,000 to buy machines for just one story. Of course, there are websites that claim to offer customer reviews of companies (ResellerRatings.com comes to mind), but it's difficult to get an idea of how accurate these ratings are. If a company has a relationship with the site, customers may be reminded at the time of purchase to describe their experience on the site—which means that there will be a variety of responses and experiences. If a company doesn't have a relationship with them, then only those who have a bone to pick may feel compelled to sign up. Dell, for instance, has a shockingly low rating of 5.68, which may be a direct reflection of the fact that "happy" Dell customers have no reason to go there.

Either way, gauging what a user's tech support experience will be like is always tough, which is why I rely on you all to relay to me your tech support stories, both good and bad.





**When you gotta game, you gotta game.** Wherever. Whenever. So dump that gargantuan rig and pick up our effortlessly portable Super LANBOY. Its durable anodized aluminum body packs nine drive bays. Two 120mm fans. A clear side window. And with its free carrying strap, it's got everything you need for gaming on the go. Except an air freshener. To view our full line of products, visit www.antec-inc.com.

Antec
The Power of You

BEST BUY STAPLES newegg.com J&R MICRO CENTER city COMPUSA CDW

## ZILLION PRO

- **AMD® Athlon™ 64 Processor with HyperTransport™ Technology The ONLY Windows-compatible 64-bit PC processor up to 1600Mhz system bus**
- Raidmax® Scorpio-668 Aluminum Tower Case with 420 Watt Power + See-Through Window + Sound-Activated Neon Light
- 512MB **DDR400** Memory
- ***Serial-ATA*** 120GB 7200RPM Hard Drive w/ 8MB Cache
- ***See Through*** 16x DVD-ROM Drive
- ***See Through*** 52x24x52 CD-RW Drive
- 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- **NVIDIA® GeForce™ FX 5900 Ultra 256MB DDR AGP 8X** Video Card
- 5.1 Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
- **10/100/1000 Mbps Ethernet LAN**
- Klipsch GMX D-5.1 Dolby Surround Sound Speakers
- 19" ViewSonic® Perfect Flat E90F+SB .21H mm Monitor
- Scrolling Internet Optical Mouse
- Multimedia Keyboard
- Microsoft Windows® XP Professional Edition
- Free Norton AntiVirus™ 2003 CD
- Free 1-Year 24/7 ***I-Care*** Deluxe Technical Support + On-Site Service

**$ 2089**

| | |
|---|---|
| AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-51 Processor | $ 2529 |
| AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor | $ 2089 |

AMD 64 Athlon

AMD 64 Athlon FX

**The ONLY** Windows-compatible 64-bit PC processor



The first 64-bit PC processor in a class by itself designed specifically for cinematic computing

Full throttle technology for immersive gaming and amazing digital media

iBUYPOWER

IBUYPOWER RECOMMENDS MICROSOFT® WINDOWS® XP

# WWW.iBUYPOWER.COM

## NIGHT DREAMER FX

- **AMD® Athlon™ 64 Processor with HyperTransport™ Technology The ONLY Windows-compatible 64-bit PC processor up to 1600Mhz system bus**
- Raidmax® Aluminum 8-Bay Super Light Weight Tower Case with 420 Watt Power + See-Through Window + Sound-Activated Neon Light
- 1024MB **DDR400** Memory
- 120GB 7200RPM Hard Drive w/ 8MB Cache
- ***See Through*** 16x DVD-ROM Drive & ***See Through*** 52x24x52 CD-RW Drive
- 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- **ATI® RADEON™ 9800-PRO 128MB DDR AGP 8X** Video Card
- 5.1 Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
- **10/100/1000 Mbps Ethernet LAN**
- Logitech Z-640 5.1 Surround Sound Speakers
- 19" ViewSonic® Perfect Flat E90FB .21H mm Monitor
- Scrolling Internet Optical Mouse
- Multimedia Keyboard
- Microsoft Windows® XP Professional Edition
- Free Norton AntiVirus™ 2003 CD
- Free 1-Year 24/7 ***I-Care*** Deluxe Technical Support + On-Site Service



**$ 1949**

| | |
|---|---|
| AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-51 Processor | $ 2499 |
| AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor | $ 1949 |

# TOLL FREE 888. 462.3899

AMD®, the AMD® Arrow logo, AMD® Athlon™, and combinations thereof are trademarks of Advanced Micro Devices, Inc

## GAMER'S SUPREME

- Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor at 2.4GHz with HT Technology
- Raidmax® Aluminum 8-Bay Super Light Weight Tower Case with 420 Watt Power+ See-Through Window + Sound-Activated Neon Light
- Intel® 865 Chip 800MHz FSB 8X AGP DDR400 HT Ready Main Board
- 512MB Dual Channel DDR400 PC3200 Memory
- 120GB 7200RPM Hard Drive
- ***See Through*** 16x DVD-ROM Drive
- ***See Through*** 52x24x52 CD-RW Drive
- NVIDIA GeForce-FX 5900 128MB DDR 8x AGP Video
- 5.1 Channel Surround Sound
- Logitech Z-640 5.1 Surround Sound Speakers
- 56K V.90 Fax/Modem & 10/100 LAN
- 19" Viewsonic E90 .23H mm Monitor
- Scrolling Internet Optical Mouse
- Multimedia Keyboard
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
- FREE Norton AntiVirus 2003 CD
- FREE 1-Year 24/7 ***i-Care*** Deluxe Technical Support + On-Site Service

**$ 1329**

| Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor with HT Technology | |
|---|---|
| 3.2 GHZ 800MHz FSB | $ 1639 |
| 3.0 GHZ 800MHz FSB | $ 1479 |
| 2.8 GHZ 800MHz FSB | $ 1389 |
| 2.6 GHZ 800MHz FSB | $ 1339 |



# WWW.iBUYPOWER.COM



## Want to have more fun?

Get the iBUYPOWER PC with the Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor with HT Technology today. It lets you run two applications at once more efficiently.

## BACK TO SCHOOL

- Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor at 2.4GHz with HT Technology
- Intel® 865 Chip 800MHz FSB 8X AGP DDR400 HT Ready Main Board
- 512MB Dual Channel DDR400 PC3200 Memory
- 80GB 7200RPM Ultra ATA-100 Hard Drive
- 52x24x52 CD-RW Drive
- 64MB NVIDIA® GeForce-4 MX440 8x AGP Video
- 5.1 Channel Surround Sound & 480Watt PMPO Subwoofer Speakers
- 10/100 Network LAN
- 19" Viewsonic E90 .23H mm Monitor
- Scrolling Internet Mouse & MultiMedia Keyboard
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
- FREE Norton AntiVirus 2003 CD
- FREE 1-Year 24/7 ***i-Care*** Deluxe Technical Support + On-Site Service

**$ 879**

| Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor with HT Technology | |
|---|---|
| 3.2 GHZ 800MHz FSB | $ 1169 |
| 3.0 GHZ 800MHz FSB | $ 1009 |
| 2.8 GHZ 800MHz FSB | $ 939 |
| 2.6 GHZ 800MHz FSB | $ 899 |

iBUYPOWER

IBUYPOWER RECOMMENDS MICROSOFT® WINDOWS® XP

# TOLL FREE 888. 462.3899

INTEL®, the INTEL® inside logo and Pentium® are registered trademarks and Celeron™ is a trademark of INTEL® Corporation in the United States and other Countries.

# Nyko Air Flo Mouse

We found the perfect mouse for late-night Web surfing! **BY DARREN GLADSTONE**




**TECH STATS**

MANUFACTURER: NYKO
PRICE: $30

I have never quite understood the importance of having a game controller that can blow air onto your hands. (Of course, next to Johnny Liu, I'm hands down the hairiest editor on the *CGW* staff, so sweat has been and always will be a big problem for me.) I mentioned my questions about a game controller with a fan in it when I reviewed Nyko's Air Flo gamepad for *CGW* a few months ago. You'll understand that I had similar questions when Wil dropped Nyko's new $30 Air Flo mouse into my lap.

The Air Flo mouse is a USB peripheral, so after I plugged it into an unpowered hub and flipped a little switch on the bottom of the mouse, the fan began a-whirring. Though not quite a Category 5 hurricane, the Air Flo mouse certainly moved more than enough air to cool down my man-sized paw.

Outside of its cooling capabilities, the Air Flo mouse's notable achievement is its styling. The rubberized top and edged sides make it a great gaming peripheral. It's certainly responsive enough, and the rubberized grip, which I haven't seen done this well on a mouse yet, makes it ideal for getting your game on.

If there is one gripe to be had with this grip, it's that I've grown accustomed to five-button mice (left/right buttons, a scroll wheel middle button, and two smaller buttons placed by the thumb). The Air Flo mouse lacks the two small thumb buttons that I like.

If you can live without those extra inputs, this little guy is reasonably priced and—dare we say it—a breeze to use. (Ugh! The puns are killing me).

**VERDICT** ★★★★☆

**This mouse is a godsend for all those sweaty-palmed late-night Web surfers.**

# Sennheiser PC-150 Headphones

How does this sound to you? **BY DARREN GLADSTONE**




**TECH STATS**

MANUFACTURER: SENNHEISER
PRICE: $70

Sennheiser headphones rock. Just pop into any electronics store and you'll know what I'm talking about. And on average, a good pair of headphones will run you at least 50 bucks. Slap a mic on these to make them PC-gaming friendly, and what do you have? A pair of kick-ass headphones that, at $70, are still reasonably affordable.

The first things you'll notice as you slip these babies over your head are the ear cups. The fabric surrounding them (and the headband) is very comfortable. Once your ears are engulfed, you'll be able to crank up the tunes and shut out the world—perfect for, say, ignoring your wife's pleas to feed the kids.

The hard but flexible plastic can take a beating—especially handy when your better half starts throwing stuff at you. And the microphone? Well, you're not exactly going to record a Top 40 album with it, but it produces crisp sound and is good for the job at hand: communicating and talking trash with your buddies online. I played *PlanetSide* and *Battlefield 1942* while using a program called *TeamSpeak*.

The fabric causes the only real problem that I had with these headphones. While comfortable, it isn't the most breathable material, so during particularly intense sessions, your cabeza will heat up. As it stands, though, these are leaps and bounds beyond the budget-minded offering we've seen from Logitech.

**You've got a pair of kick-ass headphones that are still reasonably affordable.**

**VERDICT** ★★★½☆

**Despite giving you a hot head (from the fabric), this pair of cans will keep you rockin'.**

# The ULTIMATE Killer Rig Requires the ULTIMATE Sound

## Creative 7.1 SURROUND

Sound BLASTER AUDIGY 2 ZS

- 7.1 Audio Output
- 24-bit/192kHz
- 108dB SNR Clarity
- THX® Certified and new THX® Set-up Console
- EAX® 4.0 ADVANCED™ HD
- DTS®-ES and Dolby® Digital EX Decoding



Sound Blaster® Audigy® 2 ZS Platinum Pro shown

From $99.99 to $249.99

CREATIVE GIGAWORKS™ S750

- 7.1 Speaker System
- 700 Watts Total RMS
- 210 Watts Subwoofer
- THX® Certified
- 2-way Speakers with Titanium Supertweeters
- DTS®-ES and Dolby® Digital EX Playback



Only $499.99

**Order Now and Save Big: www.americas.creative.com/7.1solution**

ALIENWARE® THE ORIGINAL ULTIMATE GAMING MACHINE

www.alienware.com

Get the Ultimate — Get CREATIVE®

©2003 Creative Technology Ltd. The Creative logo is a registered trademark of Creative Technology Ltd. in the United States and/or other countries. All brands or product names listed are trademarks or registered trademarks and are property of their respective holders.

# Loyd's Cracked Case

Multiplayer gaming could stand for some improvement **By Loyd Case**

This month, I want to touch on the whole multiplayer-gaming thing. No, not massively multiplayer games—I'm talking about small-scale multiplayer titles, like *Unreal Tournament 2003* or *Medal of Honor*, that you play with your friends online or at LAN parties.

I've touched on some of my multiplayer pet peeves in the past, like the lack of co-op play and the whole issue of multiplayer spawning. For instance, quite a few action games lack co-op play. By co-op, I mean games that allow you to play the single-player (or campaign) version with your human friends against the A.I. The *Baldur's Gate* series and *Serious Sam* games did this quite well. Meanwhile, spawning allows you to host a fixed number of players with one disc. In the past, that's typically been three players. But these days, you're hard pressed to find a game that doesn't require a disc per person. That means if I want to play multiplayer with my two kids, I have to buy a total of three units. Uh-huh, sure.

Now, I've run into a number of additional annoying multiplayer quirks that I'm happy to share with any game developers who read this. I'm hoping some of these suggestions show up in future games.

**Annoyance #1: Configuring teams** Some games don't allow you to configure teams of human and A.I. players. Try playing *UT2003* or *Battlefield 1942* with just A.I. bots on one team and humans on the other. It seems like you can do this, but either through poor design or bugs in the game, you often find that some of the humans end up on the A.I. team, or A.I. bots end up on the human team. Come on, this isn't that hard to configure.

**Annoyance #2: No bots in multiplayer** So, you want to play *Medal of Honor* multiplayer, but you only have three people participating. Sure, bots are far from perfect, but they're a great tool for fleshing out a small game if you simply want to play with a few players you actually know, on a LAN or on the Internet.

**Annoyance #3: No first-person multiplayer RPG** If you say "*Legends of Might and Magic*," you must wear the dunce cap and sit in the corner. I want an epic, *Baldur's Gate*-style RPG in which each player on the team has a first-person view of the world. Most party-oriented computer RPGs seem to want to replicate the tabletop pen-and-paper gaming experience. That's all well and good, but we want more immersion. And, no, *EverQuest* and *Star Wars Galaxies* don't count. I'm not going to pay a monthly fee to be a virtual lap dancer.



**I've run into a number of additional annoying quirks that I'm happy to share with any game developers.**

**Annoyance #4: No save during multiplayer** In a single-map game, like most shooters, this isn't a big deal. But if you're playing an epic game of some kind, you probably won't finish in a single session. The worst culprit is *Dungeon Siege*, which gives you the illusion of saving, but really only saves the character stats. The entire world resets when you exit.

**Annoyance #5: Mandatory Internet connection** Some multiplayer games require an Internet connection even if you're only playing on the LAN. Is it me, or are game companies increasingly being staffed by control freaks? Imagine a LAN party where the only Internet connection is a modem—or, even worse, one where you get together somewhere without a connection to the outside world. Of course, if the game companies allowed multiplayer spawning, they wouldn't have to play Big Brother.

There you have it. Maybe someone will pay attention to this cry in the wilderness, but after hoping for these things for years, I've become somewhat cynical. It's possible some game developer will actually read this and pay attention...but I'm not gonna hold my breath.

If you have any favorite multiplayer annoyances, drop me a line at loyd_case @ziffdavis.com. If I get enough of them, I'll write them up (with due credit) in a future column.

IMAGE COURTESY OF GAMEWALLPAPERS.COM

# ORDER TOLL FREE [800]707-0393




# WWW.CYBERPOWERINC.COM

## CyberPower Inc.

4802 Little John St. Baldwin Park, CA 91706
Tel: (626)813-7730 • Fax: (626)813-3810 • Technical Support (877)876-4965
Hour: Mon-Fri 8:30A.M. ~ 6:00P.M. • Sat 9:30A.M. ~ 3:00P.M.

Price subject to change without notice.

ARTEC



### GAMER ULTRA 7000 ELITE

**$ 1269**

- NVIDIA® Athlon™ 64 MB w/ 8X AGP
- 512MB PC3200 DDR400 Memory
- 120GB 7200RPM Hard Drive
- Nvidia Geforce™FX 5200 8X AGP Version 128MB DDR w/ TV Out
- 16X DVD-ROM & 52X24X52 CD-RW Drive
- NVIDIA nForce™3 5.1 Surround Sound
- 480 Watt Subwoofer System
- Viewsonic® 19" E90 .23MM SVGA Monitor
- 56K Modem & 1.44 Floppy Drive
- Internet Keyboard & Mouse
- **Turbo X-Dreamer Case 350Watt with See Through Windows and Sound Activated Neon Light.**
- 6 Cool Custom Colors to Choose From
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
- Microsoft® Work 7.0
- Free First Year On Site Service plus 24/7 Tech Support

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-51 Processor | $ 1759 | CAH101 |
| AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor | $ 1269 | CAH102 |



### GAMER ULTRA 8000 DREAM

**$ 1489**

- NVIDIA® Athlon™ 64 MB w/ 8X AGP
- 512MB PC3200 DDR400 Memory
- 120GB 7200RPM Ultra ATA133 Hard Drive
- NVIDIA® Geforce™ FX 5600 8X AGP 256MB w/ TV Out & DVI
- 16X DVD-ROM & 52X24X52 CD-RW Drive
- Creative Lab Sound Blaster Audigy 5.1 w/1394 IEEE
- Creative Cambridge Desk Top Theater 5.1 SBS 560 5.1 Surround Sound System
- Viewsonic® 19" E90 .23MM SVGA Monitor
- 56K Modem & 1.44MB Floppy
- Keyboard & Mouse
- Microsoft® Optical intelliMousel
- **Aluminum** X-Super Alien Server Tower Case 425W w/ MOD "See Through Windows" & Neon Light
- 6 Cool Custom Colors to Choose From
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
- Microsoft® Work 7.0
- Free First Year On Site Service plus 24/7 Tech Support

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-51 Processor | $ 1979 | CAG101 |
| AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor | $ 1489 | CAG102 |



### GAMER ULTRA 9000 PRO

**$ 1935**

- NVIDIA® Athlon™ 64 MB w/ 8X AGP
- 1024 MB PC3200 DDR400 Memory
- 120GB 7200RPM Hard Drive
- NVIDIA Geforce™FX 5900 Ultra 256MB DDR Video Card w/ Tv out & DVI
- 16X DVD-ROM & 52X24X52 CD-RW Drive
- Creative Lab Sound Blaster Audigy 2 6.1 w/1394 IEEE
- Creative Cambridge Desk Top Theater 6.1 Inspire 6600 6.1 Surround Sound System
- Viewsonic® 19" E90F+ SB .22MM SVGA Monitor
- 56K Modem & 1.44MB Floppy
- Silver PS2 Internet Keyboard
- Microsoft® Optical intelli Explorer Mouse
- **Aluminum** X-Super Alien Server Tower Case 425W w/ MOD "See Through Windows" & Neon Light
- 6 Cool Custom Colors to Choose From
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
- Microsoft® Work 7.0
- Free First Year On Site Service plus 24/7 Tech Support

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-51 Processor | $ 2419 | CAF101 |
| AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor | $ 1935 | CAF102 |

AMD, the AMD Arrow logo, AMD Athlon™, and combinations thereof are trademarks of Advanced Micro Devices, Inc.

All prices effective as of Oct., 2003

# Tech Medics

You've got questions, and everyone seems to know more than Wil **By William O'Neal**

### The ultimate gaming console

I was just wondering which game system has sold more and, on average, is better, Xbox or PlayStation 2? I just want to get the best system.

**Dan**

**As far as I can tell, the PC has outsold both PS2 and Xbox, so get one of those.**

### Hardware TnL

What is "hardware transformation and lighting"? I installed *Breed* off the *CGW* demo disc and was told I couldn't play the game because my graphics card did not support TnL. My computer isn't that old; the graphics card is an ATI Rage 128 Ultra.

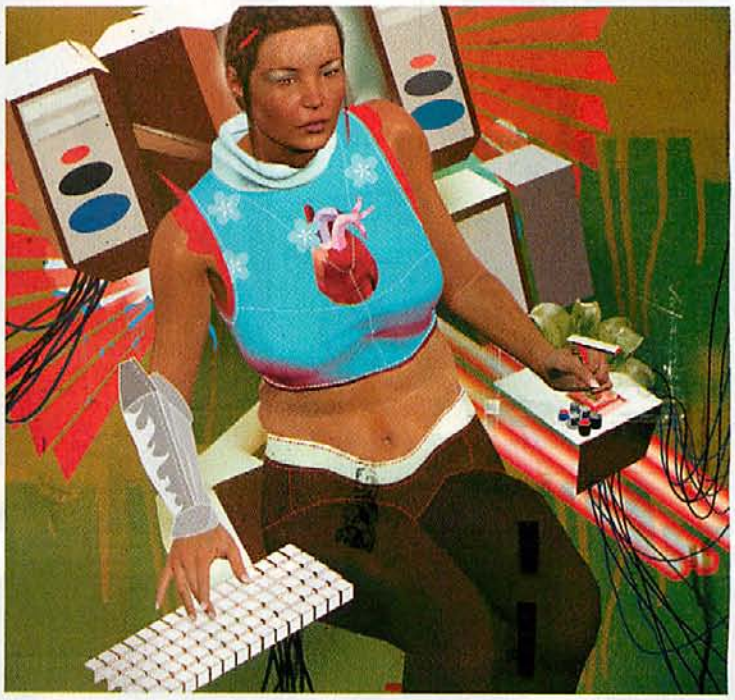
**Jerry**

**Creating the 3D images we see in games involves a couple of processes. The first process converts 3D images in a rendered scene into 2D coordinates and transfers those 2D coordinates onto a flat display device (monitor). This is done by two graphics engines: the geometry engine and the rasterization engine. The geometry engine transforms the 3D images into 2D coordinates and handles stuff like lighting effects, while the rasterization engine draws the 2D coordinates to the display device. When a graphics chip supports hardware transformation and lighting, all the stuff I've mentioned, as well as lighting effects, are done on the graphics chip itself. Back in the day, mainstream graphics chips only had rasterization engines, so they only did part of the work, like drawing the 2D coordinates on the screen. Now, more powerful chips can do all of this in hardware because they have geometry engines, too. The Rage 128 Ultra is ancient by gaming standards, so you'll need to drop a little cash on a newer card. You can get ATI's 128MB Radeon 9200 Pro for around $75. That should suffice for now.**

### Coolest dad ever!

I am in the process of buying a computer for my son, who is a gamer, and I have found what seem like some great machines from Alienware, Kass, and Dell. They range in price from $2,000 to $4,000. Besides gaming, he'll need it for school—he's in the University of Illinois electrical engineering program.

**Mike**



**Does your son know how lucky he is that his dad is buying him a machine? Your choice comes down to 1) how much you're willing to spend, 2) how upgradeable you'd like the machine to be, and 3) what kind of warranty and support you're looking for. If your price cap is $2,000, I'd suggest getting an AMD-based machine like the Alienware Aurora Enthusiast and upgrading to a 256MB graphics card. Alienware's Aurora Enthusiast also comes in an Intel configuration that's about $100 more. Dell makes a so-called gaming system called the Dimension XPS that's more expensive than a similarly equipped Alienware machine and is nowhere near as upgradeable, but you are getting Dell's awesome tech support.**

### Apparently, there's a new Half-Life game coming out

The new *Half-Life 2* movies are incredible. Will my system be able to run this unbelievable game well? I have an AMD Athlon 1GHz with 512MB of RAM and a GeForce4 Ti 4200 with 64MB. What upgrades are the best bet? I want a videocard that costs less than $300.

**Jeff**

**You'd have to define "well" for me. I imagine *Half-Life 2* will run on your machine, but I can't say for sure. I suggest spending $200 (or less) on a new graphics card (ATI's 128MB Radeon 9600 Pro and Nvidia's GeForce FX 5600 Ultra are good choices) and spending the remaining $100 on a new CPU. Find out what kind of motherboard you have and get the fastest CPU it supports.**

### The upgrade race

I'm feeling a bit envious of all of these 256MB, DirectX 9-enabled graphics cards, and I was wondering if I should upgrade this early in my computer's life. I have a Pentium 4 2.53GHz processor with 512MB of RDRAM, an 80GB hard drive, and an Nvidia GeForce4 Ti 4600 128MB running on Windows XP. Would increasing my memory or hard drive space do me any good at this point, or should I be fine with what I've got?

**Brandon**

**The memory and hard drive should be fine for now; however, you may want to upgrade your graphics card, especially if you intend to play games like *Half-Life 2* and *Doom 3*. Rest assured, though, you won't need a 256MB graphics card for those games. Both the 128MB GeForce FX 5600 and ATI Radeon 9600 support DirectX 9 and are less than $200.**

ILLUSTRATION BY JUSTIN WOOD

# Supermodels with Super Powers

Our newest range of PC game controllers have it all. Power, brains and beauty. Designed to the highest standards for the ultimate performance, these PC game controllers are all about function. We've put all our leading-edge technology inside so that you get the most out of your gaming experience. And if that's not enough there are four new models to choose from. So wrap your hands around one of these and prepare to fall in love!




**P2500**
**Rumble Force**




**P3000**
**Wireless**



**P880** **Dual Analog**




**P220** **Digital**

**P2500** **Rumble Force Pad** - Immersion® TouchSense™ Rumble Technology delivers super realistic responses. Advanced analog & digital controls for fatigue free gaming.

**P3000** **Wireless Pad & Docking Station** - Get the freedom to move unattached. Up to 30ft unblockable range, docking station for recharging and stylish storage.

**P880** **Dual Analog Pad** - Features Dual Analog joysticks, 8-way D-Pad, "On-board" Shift Key, allows each button to be programmed for 2 functions via Smart Technology™ software.

**P220** **Digital Pad** - Gives you digital presicion in the game with Dual-mode Digital Throttle.

**Available NOW!**

**Saitek**
**www.saitekusa.com**

# Killer Rigs

## The best recipe for building the ultimate gaming system By William O'Neal

In the October issue of *CGW*, I defended myself against the reader criticism regarding the prices I quote in the Killer Rigs section by saying, "Sure, I could surf the Net for the lowest prices available for each component, but ultimately, that's not helpful...who wants to build a machine culled from parts from a dozen or so e-tailers?" Like I said then, I get my prices from Pricegrabber.com, but that doesn't mean they're the least-expensive place to buy products on the Internet. *CGW* reader Paul Giles, for instance, pointed out that NewEgg.com offers better prices than Pricegrabber.com and even advertises in *CGW*. He then configured my Lean Machine for $1,027 before leaving me with this parting shot, "Perhaps your cushy writing gig pays more than I would expect if saving $300 by typing 'newegg.com' seems like such a perilous hassle to you." Touché, Paul. Of course, the reason I even bring this up again is to let readers know that Killer Rigs is less about "where to find the least-expensive parts on the Internet" than it is about "finding the right parts and making sure they work well together."



**"Perhaps your writing gig pays more than I would expect if saving $300 by typing 'newegg.com' seems like such a hassle."**

### POWER RIG

| COMPONENT | MANUFACTURER | PRICE |
|---|---|---|
| Operating system | Windows XP Professional Edition | $250 |
| Case | Antec PlusView 100AMG | $100 |
| Power supply | Antec True 480W power supply | $100 |
| Processor | 3.2GHz Intel Pentium 4 (800MHz FSB) | $750 |
| Motherboard | Intel D875PBZ (Canterwood 800MHz FSB) | $175 |
| Memory | 1GB Kingston HyperX dual channel DDR 400 PC3500 | $300 |
| Hard drive | Dual 120GB Seagate Barracuda 7200RPM serial ATA drives in a 240GB RAID-1 config | $250 |
| Graphics processor | 256MB Nvidia GeForce FX 5900 Ultra | $500 |
| Soundcard | Creative Labs Audigy 2 6.1 Platinum EX | $250 |
| DVD-ROM drive | Plextor PlexCombo DVD/CD-RW drive | $200 |
| Monitor | 21-inch NEC MultiSync FE2111SB | $600 |
| Keyboard and mouse | Microsoft Cordless Desktop Optical | $85 |
| Speakers | Creative MegaWorks 6.1 THX 600W | $400 |
| TOTAL | | $3,960 |

### LEAN MACHINE

| COMPONENT | MANUFACTURER | PRICE |
|---|---|---|
| Operating system | Windows XP Home Edition | $100 |
| Case | Antec Lanboy | $100 |
| Power supply | Onboard Antec 350W power supply | N/A |
| Processor | 2.1GHz AMD Athlon XP 3000+ | $275 |
| Motherboard | ASUS A7N8X Deluxe (nForce2 chipset) | $125 |
| Memory | 512MB Corsair PC3200 DDR | $125 |
| Hard drive | 40GB IBM DeskStar 7200RPM hard drive | $75 |
| Graphics processor | 128MB Nvidia GeForce FX 5600 Ultra | $200 |
| Soundcard | Onboard 6-channel audio | N/A |
| DVD-ROM drive | Sony 16x DVD-ROM drive | $40 |
| Monitor | 19-inch ViewSonic E90fb | $225 |
| Keyboard and mouse | Microsoft Cordless Desktop Optical | $85 |
| Speakers | Creative Labs Inspire 5200 2.1 | $70 |
| TOTAL | | $1,420 |

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARNOLD TIOSEJO

Broderbund

# Woods

# Jordan

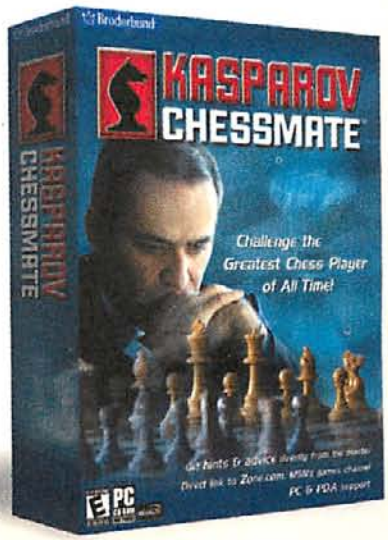
# Kasparov

## *Challenge the Greatest Chess Player of All Time!*



Garry Kasparov defended his World Champion title for ten straight years without a single defeat! Now with *Kasparov Chessmate™* you can learn and play against the greatest chess player of all time while enjoying the most complete multi-platform and online multiplayer game around.

- Sync games easily from your PC to your PDA and back without losing your place in the game
- Improve your play with tutorials from Garry Kasparov
- Direct link to Zone.com, MSN's games channel

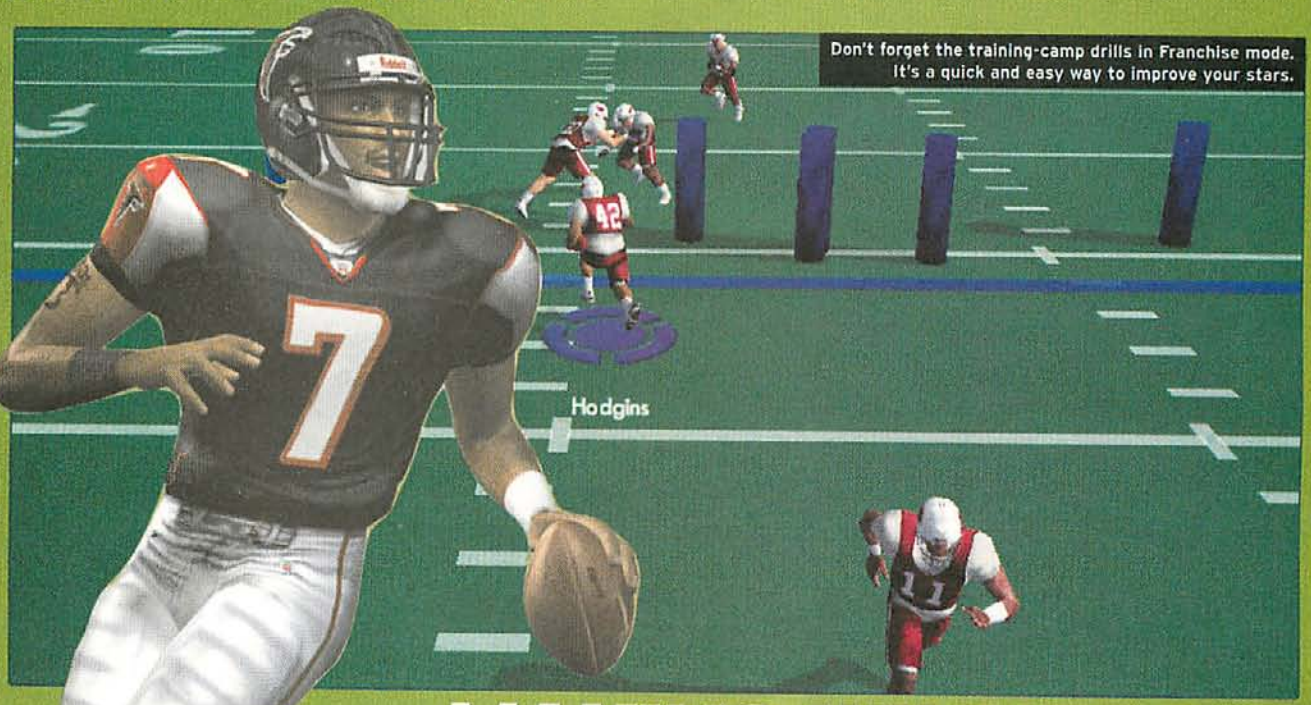



EVERYONE E ESRB

©2003 Riverdeep Interactive Learning Limited. ©2003 Kasparov Chessmate, registered trademark of Garry Kasparov, published under license by Hexacto. All rights reserved. All trademarks are the property of their respective owners

# Gamer's Edge

**Helping you suck less** Edited by Dana Jongewaard




Don't forget the training-camp drills in Franchise mode. It's a quick and easy way to improve your stars.

# MAKING WINNERS OUT OF LOSERS IN MADDEN 2004

## Take it all the way By Di Luo

**Anyone with a modicum of skill and brains can bring a championship home to the Bucs or Dolphins in *Madden 2004*. But for the hopeless romantics among you who refuse to let go of sad cases, such as the Cardinals or Bengals, a championship, much less a dynasty, requires a lot more hard work and dedication. To help you along, here's a short and dirty guide to building a successful franchise in *Madden 2004*.**

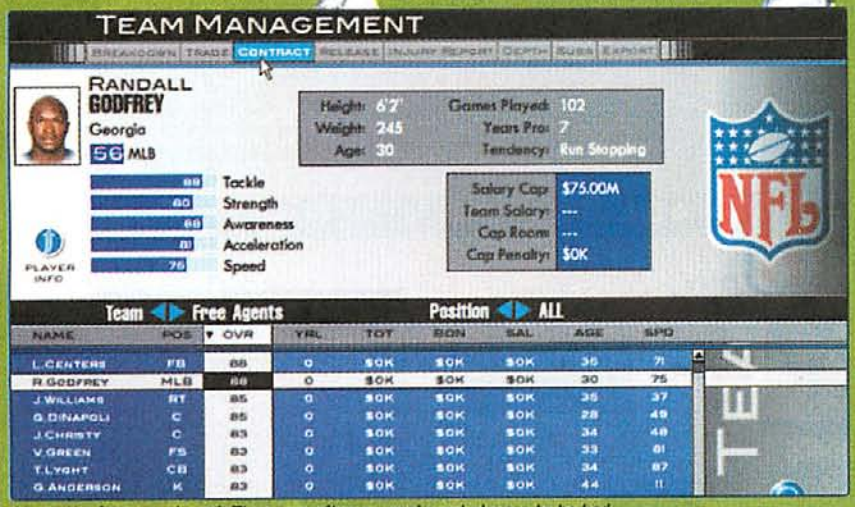
### Dollars and cents

If you're reading this, you're probably one of those sports geeks who enjoys poring over box scores almost as much as you enjoy watching the game. To create a football dynasty, you'll need to spend as much time with the menus as you do with the action part of the game.

The most important part of team management is understanding the salary cap. The new additions in the Owner's mode, such as ticket and concession prices, are simply window dressing. All you need to do is remember to raise prices to the high end of the league average without going over it. Fans will stop coming if you go too much above the league average, even if your team is the defending Super Bowl champion.

The salary cap limits how much you can spend on players, naturally. This guarantees parity in the league, so even the worst teams have a fighting chance. You'll rarely see a team with an overall rating under 80 and very few in the high 90s. In order to get around these limitations and build a team with stars starting in every position, you need to manipulate this cap through lots of trades and some wise signings.






**Abuse the free-agent pool. There are often several good players to be had.**

## DIRTIEST TRICK OF THE MONTH

**This month's dirty trick is for online favorite *PlanetSide*.**

Get an AMS certification and head into the game. Grab an AMS and drive it somewhere with a nice battle going on. Find two trees just far enough apart to fit the AMS between them and then deploy it. Since players *must* respawn at the AMS closest to them, anyone who dies near yours has to respawn at it. However, if you line up your AMS right, they won't be able to get out of the spawn tubes, and it will just keep filling with more and more people trapped in this tiny space. Eventually, they'll get mad and start shooting each other, which gives them a bunch of grief points, but doesn't give you any! And you won't get in trouble because you haven't broken any rules!

**Sam Bechara**

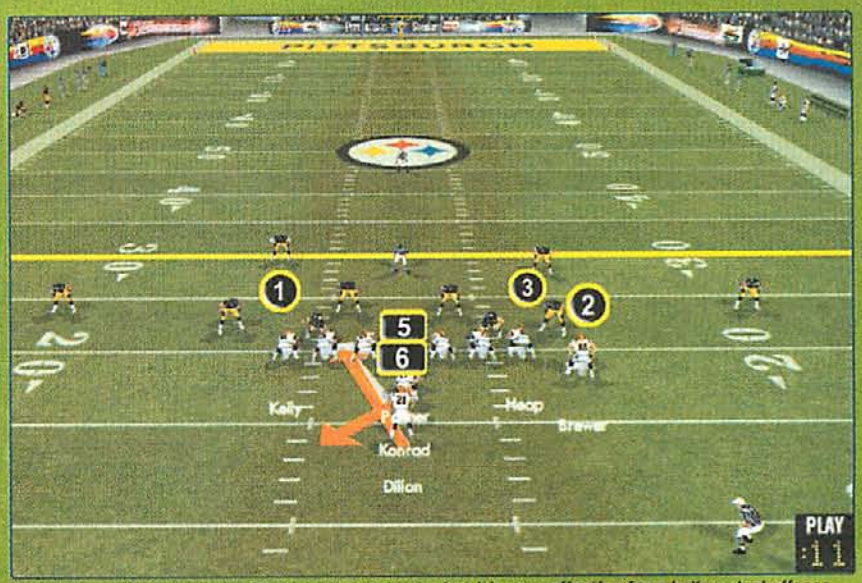



Congratulations, Sam—you've won a copy of *Tron 2.0*. If you'd like to win a free copy of *Tron 2.0*, then send your best dirty trick for a recent multiplayer game to cgwletters@ziffdavis.com with the subject line of "Dirty Trick."

The basic salary affects your team's cap on a one-to-one basis. Signing bonuses, however, are more complicated. When you give a player a signing bonus, the total is divided evenly over the years of a player's contract, with each part counting against that year's salary cap. When you trade or release that player, the total bonus money remaining on the player's contract penalizes your cap in the following year. Of course, the reverse is true—if another team trades away that player, they have to fork the bill. This means it's economically beneficial to trade for players with multiple years left on their contract since you won't have to pay for much of it.

So, why bother even giving these guys a signing bonus? Players value the bonus more than regular salary because they get the money immediately. Since football players don't have guaranteed contracts, they don't get the remainder of their salary if they're released. When you're signing free agents and rookies, those players generally see each bonus dollar as about 1.75 times the regular salary dollar. To maximize your dollars, give players you want to keep long-term large signing bonuses and lower regular salaries. They'll likely agree to the lower contract, thus reducing the cap room they use over the length of the contract. The reverse is true for short-term players. If you have the cap room, jack up the salaries you offer the players while lowering the bonus.

If you're trading for or signing a keeper (a player with ratings greater than 85 or so), look for contracts with a lot of years left. The more years he has remaining, the less you have to pay. Long contracts are more cost effective because players are willing to take less money for each year. Of course, you should only do this for young players. Football is a vicious sport; in many positions, players tend to start going downhill by their mid-30s, so try not to offer long-term contracts that'll last into the twilight of their careers. Long-term contracts are also far more cost effective than fighting it out on the free-agent market. Unless it's a superstar




**A goal-line play on your own 20 might lack subtlety, but it's very effective for a ball-control offense.**

player, don't bother fighting for him during the free-agent signing period. You'll most likely end up paying a lot more than he's worth.

### Loyalty is for suckers

Most bad teams suck for simple reasons: poor personnel decisions and cheapskate owners who refuse to spend money on good players. Learn to live with that and acknowledge the pain and suffering the previous owners have caused for the diehard fans. Luckily, you're now in control and can do anything you want with your new toy. Spend what you want and fire who you want. In order to succeed, you'll have to be prepared to throw out the old regime like a tub of used bath water.

First, find the problems that are sapping resources from your team. A good tool in the Team Management screen is the sorting you can do by positions or salaries. Jot down the keepers and, more importantly, the garbage. Marginal players who cost more than they're worth should be noted as trade bait. If a player's ratings are under 80, he should never cost more than $2 million a year.

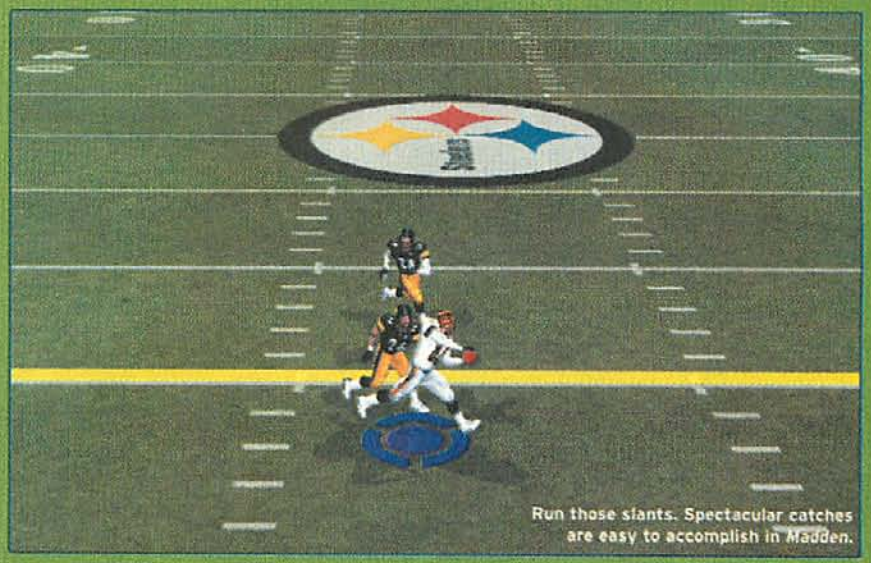
There may be some favorites and big names on your list that you'll be reluctant to say goodbye to. They could be childhood favorites or perennial producers, but even football players get old and slow. He might have been a 10-time Pro Bowler, but at 42, can that favorite cornerback still catch up to a young tight end, much less an elite receiver? You're an owner now, so be cold blooded and think of that championship. Loyalty and sentimentality be damned.

Getting rid of bad apples will be costly in effort, time, and money. Due to the cap penalty for trading players with big bonuses, your first season or two after taking over a franchise will be a rebuilding process. Don't expect an immediate championship, although there is a chance of it if you're really good with the control pad.

### Trade trade trade

Simply releasing your problem players gets you nothing but an empty roster and a big cap hit. Trade them instead. Computer owners are stupid. While they won't give you first-round picks for your garbage, they'll often give midrange draft picks. Players with overall ratings between 70 and 80 will generally get third- or fourth-round picks. Players rated in the 60s really aren't worth your trouble to trade, while higher-rated players are generally keepers unless they're horribly overpaid.

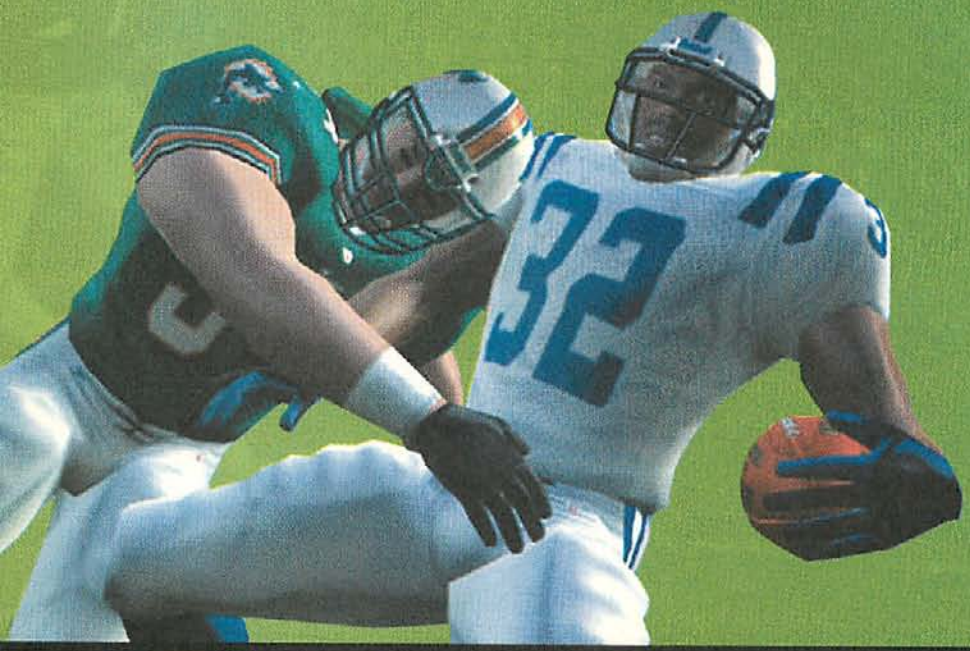
When you trade, be sure to shop around. Some teams need certain players more than others and will therefore offer more in exchange. The game attempts to limit your ability to trade your rejects by restricting trades to include no more than three items and teams to only 55 players. Due to these restrictions, you'll often run into teams that are willing to trade but don't have enough room on their rosters to accept the deal. Get around this by trading a low pick, like a seventh rounder, for one the worst players on the other team. After you make room, you can then trade away your garbage to the team's newly freed roster slot.



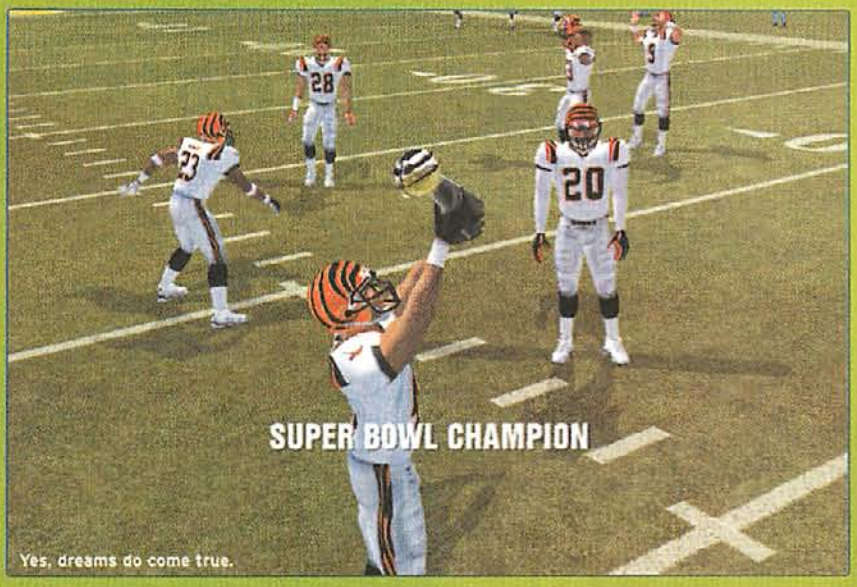
Run those slants. Spectacular catches are easy to accomplish in Madden.




The Team Management screen will be your best friend. Dump the junk and re-sign the treasures.







Yes, dreams do come true.

You can also abuse *Madden*'s unlimited trade allowance. Check out the free agents who remain on the market after the season starts. You'll usually find quite a few with ratings in the 70s. Sign them to short-term contracts without bonuses, then trade them to needy teams. This process is tedious, but you're basically earning yourself free draft picks, which are the key to immediate success.

Once you've amassed a good selection of picks, go shopping. Find good, proven players with long contracts, low salaries, and no gray hairs. Since they're proven and you won't have to pay signing bonuses, it's often preferable to pay draft picks to get these guys instead of going for the crap shoot that is the NFL draft. Always try to get good linemen on both sides of the ball, and remember the cliché that defense wins championships. You can get away with an average quarterback and receivers, but a bad defensive line will kill you every time.

Of course, if you have the resources, it doesn't hurt to have a few draft picks in reserve. In the sixth week of the season (the last week before the trading deadline), you might also want to find the poorest teams and try to trade for their high draft picks. This might give you potential picks in the top five next season and can be very valuable as trade bait as well. It's also very difficult to trade for superstar-caliber players with ratings in the high 90s while they're in their prime. Unlike most of your starters, you'll have find these guys in the drafts or on the free-agent market.

**It's often preferable to pay draft picks to get good, proven players rather than going for the crap shoot that is the NFL draft.**

### When the action finally starts

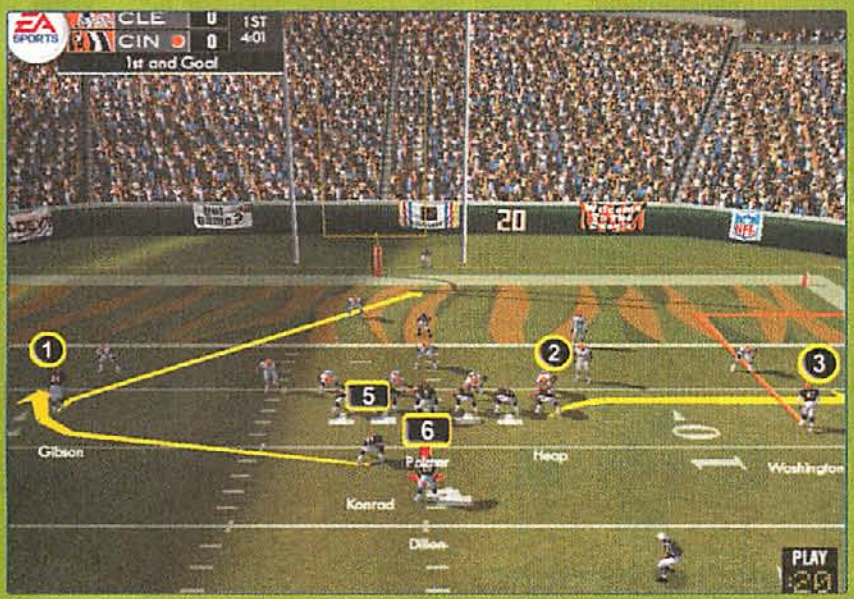
If you've planned well, a good team will march to victory once the action starts, even if you aren't very good at the hand-eye coordination business. There are a few things to remember here, though.

Injuries are rare in *Madden*, and fatigue doesn't play a big role. You'll rarely lose more than three or four players a year, so save money and don't bother to fill up your 55-man roster. Simply hire the bare minimum. If you run into trouble, there's usually a large free-agent pool to get the replacements you need.

While playing the game, remember the BS factor that comes with it. Receivers usually catch anything thrown at them as long as they're not swamped by coverage. This makes short passes far more effective than in real life, and with a decent quarterback/receiver, short slants and flat patterns almost always result in completions. Tight ends and running backs will also be far more effective in receiving roles than they are in the real game.

If you have a good front line, feel free to use goal-line formations even if you're in the middle of the field. The computer has trouble defending against this, and you can often get 7- or 8-yard runs. Another benefit of this is that it's often advisable to go for it on fourth down and short instead of punting.

If you have a little patience and some persistence, you can bring any team in *Madden* a championship. Simply pay attention to your finances, don't give out silly contracts, and trade wisely. Within three game years, even the Cardinals and Bengals can be winners.



**The computer tends to concentrate on the middle of the field, leaving running backs who run out into the flanks unmolested.**

# AGE OF WONDERS: SHADOW MAGIC

## The most fun you can have with elves and demons

**By Tom Chick and Bruce Geryk**

**Pregame: Tom is playing the Shadow Demons, using death magic and the scholarship skill (increases the speed of research). Bruce is playing the Elves, using four orbs of air and two orbs of earth. His wizard has scholarship, channeling (reduces cost for spellcasting), and decadence (increases gold cost for unit upkeep).**



### Tom, Day 1

My first order of business is to secure the shadow realm. If I have free reign down here, I'll be able to use the realm's increased movement speed to run units around faster than anyone on the surface world can react: it's like having a magical subway system. I was hoping I would be alone down here, but it turns out I'll have to contend with O'neron, a Syron wizard. My capital, Gilzulum, is tucked into the southwest corner of the realm. Moving north, my skimmer, a giant dragonfly scout, was fortunate enough to find Elven and Draconian outposts. I've captured them both and I'm in the process of banishing their citizens and moving in my own people. Er, demons.



### Bruce, Day 4

I'm saving money in hopes of coming across a town that I can pay to join me. As it happens, I find a Syron city just a few turns south of my capital and manage to buy it. However, I've got to manage my gold and make sure I have enough income to offset the cost of decadence. If I'm not careful, I could find myself supporting an army so large that I can't afford any buildings. Therefore, I'll try to make a point of using lots of summoned units, whose mana support isn't affected by my decadence.

### Tom, Day 11

I've seen a few of O'neron's scouts. He seems to be located farther north, but much closer than I'd expected. I need to contain him quickly. Under the leadership of the Shadow Demon warrior Xulux and the Orc shaman Bogga, I have an army ready to move out from the twin outposts.

### Bruce, Day 13

The last time we played this game, Tom rode roughshod over me in the endgame thanks to superior spellcasting. This time I'm determined not to let him beat me that way. Right now, my air/earth combo gives me Seeker, a superlative spell that improves the accuracy and reach of missile attackers, and Stone Skin, which improves armor and gives melee units greater survivability. In a longer game, it's important to have at least four orbs in a particular sphere of magic so you can get to the powerful fourth level spells. My plan is to quickly research as many of the lower level spells as I can to open slots for higher-level spells.

### Tom, Day 14

My skimmer has found O'neron's capital and it looks like O'neron hasn't been able to expand much. Even better, his city is located at the tip of a peninsula. Xulux and Bogga will keep him boxed in until I can amass a large enough army to lay siege to his city. Capturing a fully developed city this early in the game will be an enormous boon for me.



Tom cuts off the Syron capital to keep its wizard from expanding.



Bruce's iron maiden delivers the coup de grace to Tom's wizard.




Before being killed by a treacherous Archon priest, Bogga had become an accomplished spellcasters.



The last thing Tom sees.



The city of Aleala is an important choke point.



Bruce begins his conquest to recapture Aleala from Tom.



Bruce wins the battle for Aleala in style.

### Bruce, Day 17

I've explored a good part of the surface world and have located three A.I. players: a Human, an Orc, and another Elf. Hopefully, I'll be able to use the Humans and Elves as leverage against Tom, since his race isn't on good terms with them. Also, I've taken some Tigran outposts, which I plan to build up to develop manticores that will make up for the Elven deficiency in flying units.

### Tom, Day 18

O'neron has been banished—it's time for me to crawl into the sunlight. My skimmer has been exploring the surface world, scouting the shadow portals and collecting stray gold and mana. So far, there is a portal near Gilzulum, one farther north near O'neron's old capital, and one to the east, which sits roughly in the center of the world. I'll explore from this last portal to get a sense of who's wandering around up here, but my heroes and their armies will emerge from the Gilzulum portal to capture a nearby Nomad outpost and establish my first surface city.

### Tom, Day 21

O'neron must have managed to crawl out of the shadow realm before I banished him. Just 12 hexes away from the shadow portal near his old capital, out in the surface world desert, is the Syron city of Aleala, now occupied by Bruce's Elves. I was hoping we wouldn't run into each other this early. And I certainly don't want Bruce building lightning-flinging Syron units, since almost all of my Shadow Demons are afflicted with lightning weakness. Fortunately, Aleala is lightly guarded and it falls easily. Now, to see if I can hold it....

### Bruce, Day 24

Now that he's taken one of my cities, Tom will learn why I chose the Elves. The iron maiden, the fairy dragon, and the summoned unicorn all have the ability to phase, which teleports them to any spot once per battle, and even leaves them with enough movement points for a single attack. Whereas flying units still have to approach and are potentially vulnerable to missile fire, phasing units just appear in position and attack on the first turn. My unicorns and a lone iron maiden make short work of Tom's little larvae and his bombard, while a treeman from my capital's secret glade knocks down the walls and clears the way for my hero.




It only takes a few Shadow Demon casualties to send this stack into revolt.

### Tom, Day 32

After losing during a couple more attempts to take back Aleala, I've decided Bruce can damn well have the stupid thing. I'm just going to set up a defensive position on the nearby shadow portal to keep him away from my cities. Unfortunately, the adjacent stack rule doesn't apply to units passing through portals; no matter how many units I have surrounding a portal on the other side, when Bruce comes through, he only has to fight units directly on the portal's hex. So, I'm making my stand in the surface world. I'll bring up a portable Nomad city to establish a position next to the portal. Among its defenders, I include a brain, a unit that extends my domain in a five hex radius. My Domain of Darkness, which cuts in half the viewing radius of all enemy units in my domain, will be finished in two days. This should keep my forces well hidden. With the effective use of mobile and far-seeing skimmers, I'll be able to see Bruce coming. I can use Spider's Curse to web his approaching units and slow him down even more. In the meantime, I'm gathering up a second stack to emerge from the portal in the center of the map and drive north into Bruce's terrain. If he's like me, he can't afford to keep too many defenders in his capital. A surgical strike might win the game.

### Bruce, Day 39

Tom has the portal to his shadow lair pretty well covered; the reduced viewing range from that global spell he cast makes it really hard to know what I'm facing until it's too late. I'm reluctant to risk too valuable a stack of units,

since I need to keep around some defenders for my nearby capital. This is too close for comfort. I'll have to think of a different way to get past him. Think, brain!

### Tom, Day 39

Racially mixed stacks can be tricky when the other race doesn't like you. The key is to make sure the malcontents are outnumbered. So early on, when I found an Archon priest at an inn, I took him on and kept him with Bogga, my Orc shaman; she would make sure he didn't get any ideas. A few days later, I liberated five low-level Syron units from a dungeon. I spread them between two stacks of Shadow Demons to keep them in line. Each stack's morale is stable, so I presumed I'd be OK. But a few turns ago, I came across a dragon's lair defended by a red dragon and two fire elementals. I got both my stacks in position and attacked yesterday. In the ensuing battle, I lost Bogga (she had just acquired Casting Specialist IV!) and some of my Shadow Demons, leaving the Archon priest and Syron units free to rebel. What's more, the red dragon joined them! Now, thanks to my misguided efforts at racial integration, I have to contend with a powerful rogue stack.

### Bruce, Day 43

The item forge is like your own little magic-item Barbie Oven. You pick an item and a power and hit the button, and then later, you get to take it out and look at it. First, I choose a pipe, which is equipped on the head, and give it Vision I for extended line of sight. That, along with my glade runners and scouts, will help me see a bit farther in Tom's Domain of Darkness. The Pipe of Vision! I love it. I wanted to increase my hero's casting skill with a Gandalf-looking wizard hat, but at 750 gold and 11 turns, it's a bit pricey, especially for a decadent wizard like mine.

### Tom, Day 46

Ugh, I've got Elves coming at me from every which way. My surgical strike stack consisted of the Nomads' fast horse archers led by Xulux, my now formidable Shadow Demon warrior. After I emerged into the center of the surface world, I found a bunch of Elves belonging to one of the computer players. They were making a beeline for my territory. I had to recall Xulux to fend them off. He handily intercepted them, but the battle decimated my army.



Bruce wins the battle for Aleala in style.

### Tom, Day 48

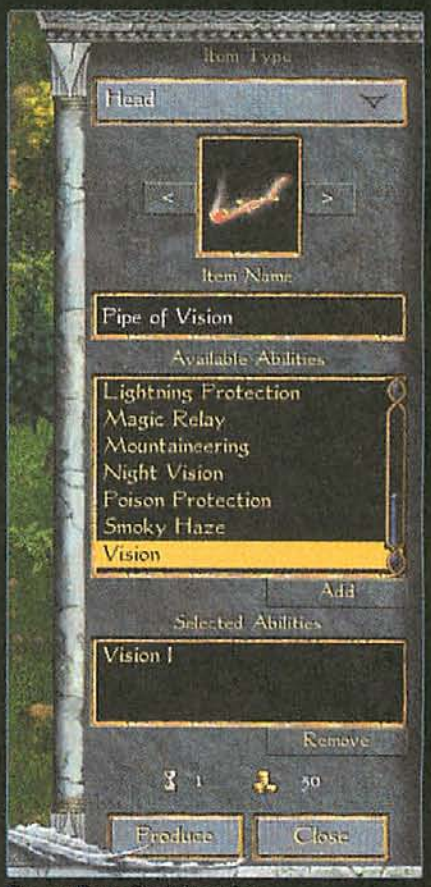
I've got a pair of skimmers running around in Bruce's territory, seizing undefended mines and mana nodes, but Bruce sends cavalry out to recapture them as soon as I move on. I can't tell if this is hurting him. I came across a road that dead-ended into a group of trees, moved my skimmer there, and discovered I'd found his hidden capital. Ha! Elven cloaking! Nice try, Geryk. I couldn't resist trying for a quick victory, but he had a couple of archers who easily shot down my skimmer. But now, I know where to bring my army once I get it past the computer player's pesky Elves.

### Bruce, Day 56

I almost have the Shadow Shift spell researched, which is going to be a big surprise for that maginot line Tom has positioned around the closest shadow portal. This spell will send units from the surface directly to a nearby spot in the shadow realm. With this spell, I can bypass Tom's defenses completely. I have five scouts, which Tom forced me to build by harassing me with those stupid dragonflies, positioned around the surface world. I'm going to transdimensionally paradrop them into the shadow realm to make way for a siege stack I have waiting.



Tom's skimmer dragonflies are excellent scouts and skirmishers.




Because Bruce Geryk is a toker.

The only drawback is that Shadow Shift is expensive. At 27 mana per unit, I can only afford to send through two units per turn. But first, I have to prime a Disjunction spell to remove Domain of Darkness. My scouts will need to be able to see once they get down there. I hope Tom's hurting for mana and he doesn't immediately re-cast Domain of Darkness, because I'm about to deplete my mana stores.

### Tom, Day 57
Still more computer-player Elves trickling towards my shadow portal in the center of the map. How annoying. I have three stacks ready to move up toward Bruce's capital, but he hasn't been attacking from Aleala lately, so I don't know what he's up to now. I briefly considered using these stacks to take out that annoying computer Elven wizard, but frankly, he's more of a nuisance than a genuine threat.

### Bruce, Day 58
The 75 percent chance of Disjunction was successful and the first two scouts are away. Luck is with me, because I've found what must be his capital—as I can tell by the wizard's tower. Unfortunately, his wizard isn't home. Fortunately, neither is anyone else! A lone scout waltzes in unopposed and I immediately queue up the wizard's tower to sell it.

### Tom, Day 58
What the hell! I thought I had all the shadow portals covered when Bruce manages to get a lone unit into the city I captured from O'neron. I don't know what he thinks he's doing, since that single horseman isn't going to hold the city for very long. What's most alarming is that I don't know how he's getting down here. Also, I have a lot of undefended cities around here. Time to put some token defenders into the build queue. I wasn't expecting to have to fight down here anytime soon.

### Bruce, Day 59
The stealth assault continues. Shadow-shifting Taballu and his iron maiden escort got lucky and appeared right next to another undefended city. Next turn, two more iron maidens come in. I made sure to enchant them all with Shadow Walking before dropping them in, but it might have been unnecessary, since I'm not encountering any opposition down here.

### Tom, Day 59
There goes another city. I just thought of something: Bruce took my only other wizard's tower. I'm not in any danger of losing all my territory to this penny-ante invasion, and I'm recalling my three stacks from the center of the surface world to squash these meager attackers. But if my wizard loses a battle and doesn't have another wizard's tower to teleport to, the game is over and Bruce has won. I don't yet have the gold to queue up another tower, much less hurry its construction, so I've got to get everyone to Gilzulum posthaste, where I'm amassing as many cheap defenders as I can afford. I'm two turns out from summoning a bone dragon, which will also hold him back. How could I have been this stupid, to leave everything undefended?

### Bruce, Day 60
I spy, with my little scout, something that begins with the letter "W." It's Tom's wizard. Units move so quickly in the shadow realm that I was able to cross to the edge of the realm in one turn, where I found what must be Tom's back-up city. He's got three weak units in there with his wizard, but Taballu and three iron maidens are only two turns away. I'll try to keep the scout, whose superior Vision II lets him see farther than Tom's units, back out of his line of sight so he doesn't know I'm coming.


Bruce recaptures the Syron city of Aleala from Tom.


After Shadow Shifting in, Bruce manages to surprise the first of Tom's undefended cities.

### Tom, Day 61
As I was bringing in reinforcements, I managed to ambush one of Bruce's Elven units. He must have cast some sort of concealment spell and sneaked them through a portal. Also, I brought units back down from the Nomad city near the Aleala portal and recaptured O'neron's city. Bruce didn't even leave a defender, though the greedy bastard did raze the wizard's tower. Now I have enough money to rebuild it. Time to hunt down that hero he brought down here.

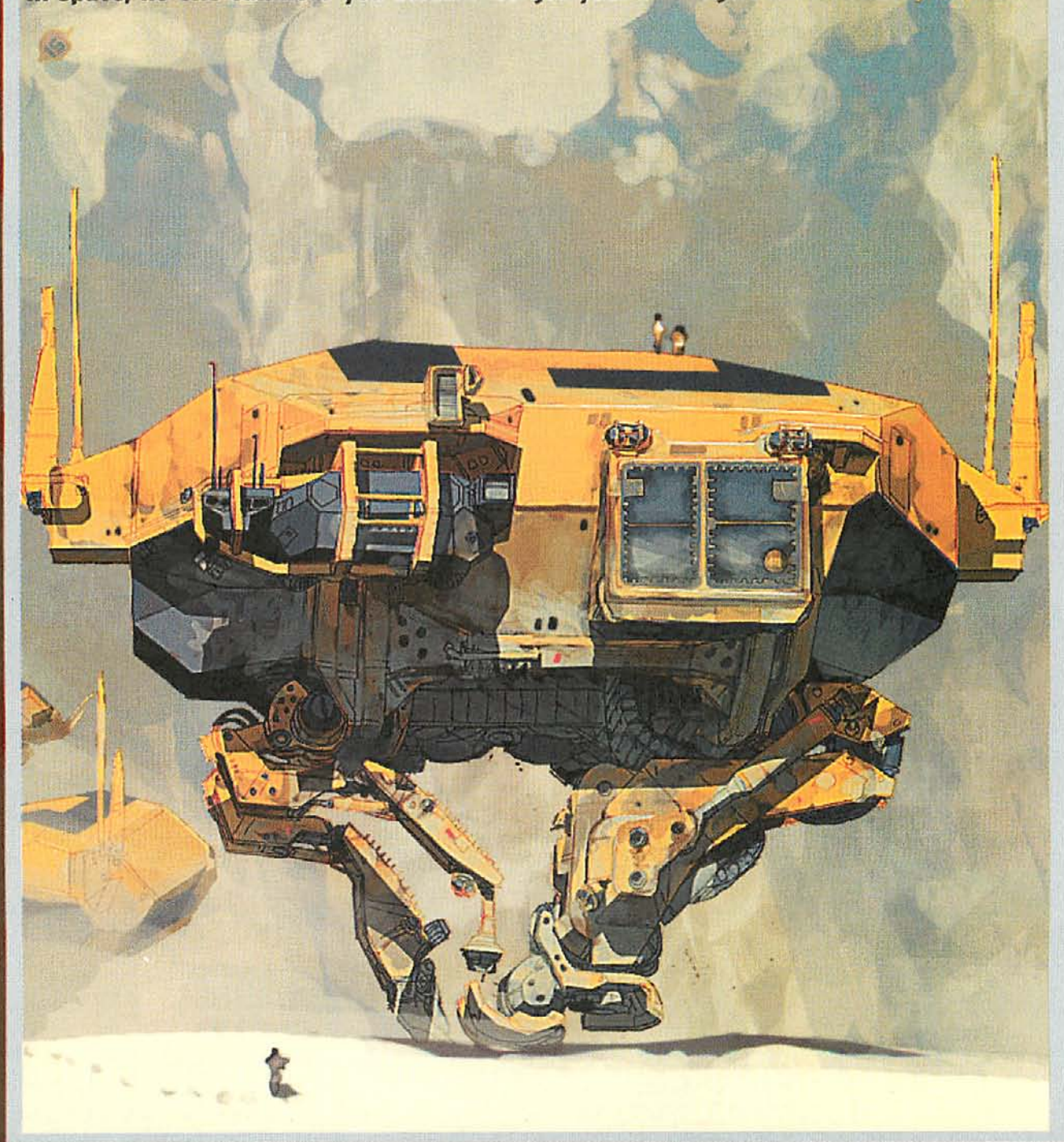
### Bruce, Day 62
It wasn't a very epic conclusion. Taballu, his iron maidens, and the lone surviving scout attacked Tom's wizard, two larvae, and a bombard in the city of Gilzulum. He must not have had any more wizard's towers, because once I won the battle, Tom was banished. Technically, I still have to beat the computer players for an official victory, but the point is that I beat Tom at *Age of Wonders: Shadow Magic*.



Four orbs of air magic and two orbs of earth magic give Bruce access to more-powerful air spells.

# HOMEWORLD 2

**In space, no one can hear you scream—so get your strategies here first** By Di Luo





Battles in *HW2* are usually confused affairs. Feel free to just throw your mobs into the mix.



A flotilla of battle cruisers screened by fighters and gunships.



A wall of ion platforms softens the enemy before it can engage more expensive mobile units.

**Unlike its predecessor, *Homeworld 2* is far more about economic strategy than good tactics. Good tactics probably won't turn around a losing situation, and many of the fine-tuning factors of the original are gone. Also gone are elaborate formations, and the aggression stances are more about whom your units attack than their maneuvers or firepower.**

**Whether you choose to rush with fighters or wait till you have a pair of battle cruisers, you must keep up a steady income and production. The rate of attrition for ships and the speed at which the enemy can destroy your production facilities mean that anyone who falls moderately behind has little hope of gaining victory. The following includes a few hints and strategies, which we hope will help you in gaining those little advantages that'll bring victory in both single-player and multiplayer.**

### Assembly line to victory

Like the Americans in World War II, the size of your purse will determine victory. In multiplayer games, always try to get as much production going as soon as you can. You will begin the game with several resource collectors. Set them harvesting in the asteroid field next to your start point. Immediately begin producing more collectors at both your carrier and mothership. The optimal number to have is about 20 total. If you have less, you'll run out of resources quickly. More, and you may fall behind in the arms race, leaving yourself wide open for attack.

To keep your collectors from getting into a traffic jam, build a mobile resource refinery to facilitate the mining. Each processing facility can usually support five or six collectors without traffic jams. Most initial resource fields will be too small to support all your collectors, so it might be wise to send your carrier off to another asteroid field. This also allows you to build away from the main focus of your opponent and perhaps surprise him with a



## A Guide to Homeworld 2 Ships: Hilgaran

| Interceptors: | Gunship | Torpedo Frigate |
|---|---|---|
| 5-ship squadron<br>Cost: 500<br>Build time: 35 seconds<br>Move: 325<br>Firepower: 36<br>Armor: 150 | 3-ship squadron<br>Cost: 625<br>Build time: 45 seconds<br>Move: 21,556<br>Firepower: 56<br>Armor: 1,200 | 1 ship<br>Cost: 700<br>Build time: 55 seconds<br>Move: 161<br>Firepower: 305<br>Armor: 12,000 |
| **Carrier** | **Bombers** | **Pulsar Gunship** |
| 1 ship<br>Cost: 2,800<br>Build time: 65 seconds<br>Move: 75<br>Firepower: 40<br>Armor: 80,000 | 5-ship squadron<br>Cost: 550<br>Build time: 40 seconds<br>Move: 260<br>Firepower: 439<br>Armor: 150 | 3-ship squadron<br>Cost: 625<br>Build time: 45 seconds<br>Move: 215<br>Firepower: 36<br>Armor: 1,200 |
| **Flak Frigate** | **Destroyer** | **Gun Platform** |
| 1 ship<br>Cost: 700<br>Build time: 55 seconds<br>Move: 161<br>Firepower: 150<br>Armor: 16,000 | 1 ship<br>Cost: 2,000<br>Build time: 165 seconds<br>Move: 115<br>Firepower: 1,034<br>Armor: 85,000 | 1 platform<br>Cost: 300<br>Build time: 20 seconds<br>Move: 200<br>Firepower: 32<br>Armor: 5,000 |
| **Ion Platform** | **Ion Frigate** | **Battle Cruiser** |
| 1 platform<br>Cost: 300<br>Build time: 20 seconds<br>Move: 200<br>Firepower: 167<br>Armor: 5,000 | 1 ship<br>Cost: 700<br>Build time: 55 seconds<br>Move: 161<br>Firepower: 315<br>Armor: 16,000 | 1 ship<br>Cost: 4,000<br>Build time: 255 seconds<br>Move: 69<br>Firepower: 5,200<br>Armor: 240,000 |

flanking maneuver. The downside, of course, is that your overextended forces might be discovered and destroyed by an aggressive enemy before you can react. If you have more than six resource collectors working at the alternate site, another mobile resource refinery should be built.

### Rock-paper-scissors

As with most real-time strategy games, there's a heavy element of rock-paper-scissors in *HW2*'s combat system. Essentially, small crafts such as fighters and bombers can be picked off by corvettes, which in turn are prey to frigates. Destroyers can destroy frigates and corvettes with ease but are very vulnerable to the destructive powers of the battle cruiser. Both capital ship classes have weapons that are generally too slow to fend off mobs of bombers. A fleet relying solely on any one ship class is doomed to failure, so make sure you have a balanced fleet.

The two sides aren't terribly different in their fleet compositions. The Hilgarans have higher tech, fast ships, and more powerful small craft that favor finesse. The Vagyr rely more on large mobs and brute force. They can build more ships and manipulate hyperspace, plus their large ships have more firepower. Though the differences between the sides are subtle, they do often dictate some of the tactics. The Vagyr will generally wait to have big cap ships to go in for the kill, while the Hilgarans can attempt an earlier assault, featuring lightning raids with their small ships and even a main assault with frigates before the Vagyr can research and deploy their capital ships.

If you have to choose, though, build interceptors and bombers instead of corvettes. The fighter class ships are cheaper, faster, and built more quickly. Though their squadrons are a bit smaller, the Hilgarans enjoy a substantial advantage in the speed and firepower of their small craft compared with the Vagyr.

Corvettes are pretty useless except in anti-fighter roles, and their armor is too weak to last long even against small craft. They're at best a stopgap measure in the event of emergency. The Vagyr do have the laser corvette, which has substantial firepower for a ship its size, but it doesn't have the staying power of a good frigate.

Frigates are more versatile than the smaller corvettes. Their armor is thick enough to last a while, and they can do damage to both large and small craft. The Hilgaran again have an advantage in this class. A wall of their flak frigates can easily destroy a wave of fighters, while their ion and torpedo frigates can bring down capital and frigate class ships if employed in large numbers.

There isn't much difference between the destroyers and battle cruisers of the two sides except that Vagyr ships have slightly more firepower. The big difference in capital ships is between the carriers. The Vagyr can build theirs more quickly and cheaply, but their carrier supports only one production facility each. The Hilgaran carrier can house multiple production facilities and has more armor, but it costs substantially more, is slower to build, and has fewer point-defense systems.



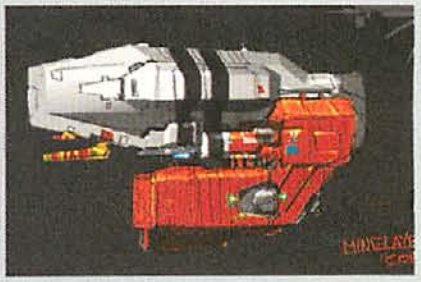
Last throes of a Vagyr destroyer.

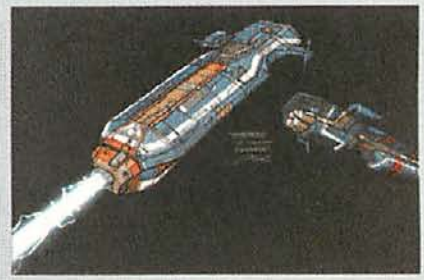
## A Guide to Homeworld 2 Ships: Vagyr

| Assault Crafts | Missile Corvette | Heavy Missile Frigate: |
|---|---|---|
| 7-ship squadron<br>Cost: 500<br>Build time: 35 seconds<br>Move: 260<br>Firepower: 43<br>Armor: 150 | 4-ship squadron<br>Cost: 625<br>Build time: 45 seconds<br>Move: 215<br>Firepower: 26<br>Armor: 1,600 | 1 ship<br>Cost: 700<br>Build time: 55 seconds<br>Move: 150<br>Firepower: 351<br>Armor: 16,000 |
| **Carrier** | **Lance Fighters** | **Assault Frigate** |
| 1 ship<br>Cost: 1,700<br>Build time: 45 seconds<br>Move: 75<br>Firepower: 200<br>Armor: 55,000 | 6-ship squadron<br>Cost: 590<br>Build time: 35 seconds<br>Move: 260<br>Firepower: 43<br>Armor: 150 | 1 ship<br>Cost: 700<br>Build time: 55 seconds<br>Move: 161<br>Firepower: 127<br>Armor: 16,000 |
| **Destroyer** | **Destroyer** | **Bombers** |
| 1 ship<br>Cost: 2,000<br>Build time: 165 seconds<br>Move: 115<br>Firepower: 1,100<br>Armor: 85,000 | 1 ship<br>Cost: 2,000<br>Build time: 165 seconds<br>Move: 115<br>Firepower: 1,100<br>Armor: 85,000 | 6-ship squadron<br>Cost: 550<br>Build time: 40 seconds<br>Move: 260<br>Firepower: 332<br>Armor: 180 |
| **Gun Platform** | **Missile Platform** | **Battle Cruiser** |
| 1 platform<br>Cost: 300<br>Build time: 20 seconds<br>Move: 200<br>Firepower: 32<br>Armor: 5,000 | 1 platform<br>Cost: 300<br>Build time: 20 seconds<br>Move: 200<br>Firepower: 127<br>Armor: 5,000 | 1 ship<br>Cost: 4,000<br>Build time: 285 seconds<br>Move: 69<br>Firepower: 5,404<br>Armor: 240,000 |

### Attack of the giant platforms

One major difference between *Homeworld* and *Homeworld 2* is the prominence of stationary defenses. While mine laying in *Homeworld 2*







It'll take less than a minute for two battle cruisers to reduce a mothership to cosmic dust.

remains relatively useless, the gun platforms are not. At only 300 resource points a pop, they are the cheapest combat units around and are built nearly twice as quickly as fighters. Their armor ratings are modest, but if you research the improved armor for platforms, they are almost as durable as a torpedo frigate.

Platforms come in both antifighter and antifrigate/capital ship varieties. If you're employing these ships on defense, it's a good idea to have a good mix of them deployed around your main production area. These platforms will come in very handy in some of the tougher missions in the single-player game. Since you're usually horribly outnumbered even after you reach the unit cap, the extra 20 platforms that you can build can make the difference in a tight battle. You should attempt to draw the enemy piecemeal into prepared positions, where you can concentrate the fire of your platforms and mobile units to overcome the enemy's numeric advantage.

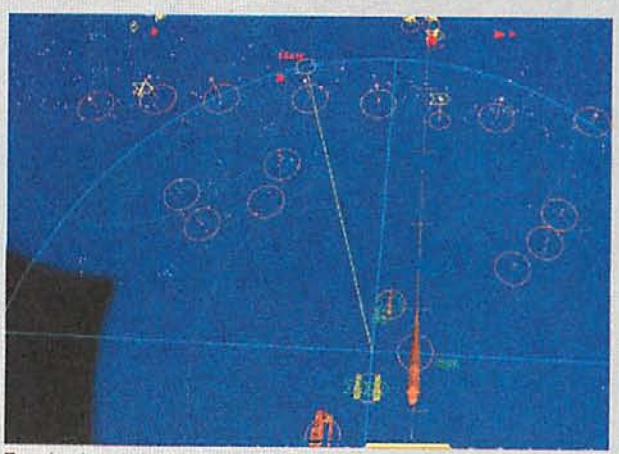
In skirmish games, you can even consider the platforms for offensive operations. They have one-shot movement that allows you to deploy them to any one point on the map. Once they reach it, they can't move again, so you should target enemy areas of production. If you send 20 platforms en masse, you might be able to destroy some enemy-production facilities and slow him down long enough for you to gain the lead in production. When used in offense, the ion and missile platforms are probably more useful due to their higher firepower. If your enemy has a large number of bombers, use the gun platforms instead.

## Stay focused

With the maps so large and two-player games rarely lasting more than 40 minutes, you must stay focused to win in *Homeworld 2*. Don't bother micromanaging battles unless you can afford the time. The one who wins the production race will win the war, even if the battles are lost. If you can manage the battles, remember which ship class beats which. Don't send your fighters to attack flak frigates, and don't send your destroyer chasing after fighters. If you set your units on aggressive stance here, be careful. They'll chase anything that comes into their range, even if they're horribly outmatched.

During combat, don't be too taken with gimmick ships. Capturing enemy ships with the marine/infiltrator frigate takes too long, and the ships are too slow and fragile. They're also quite expensive, making them cost-ineffective—unless you can capture a destroyer or battle cruiser. Likewise, the defense-field generator is too expensive, covers too little ground, and runs out of steam too quickly. Minefields can be useful, but they take forever to deploy, and the enemy can often just flank around them.

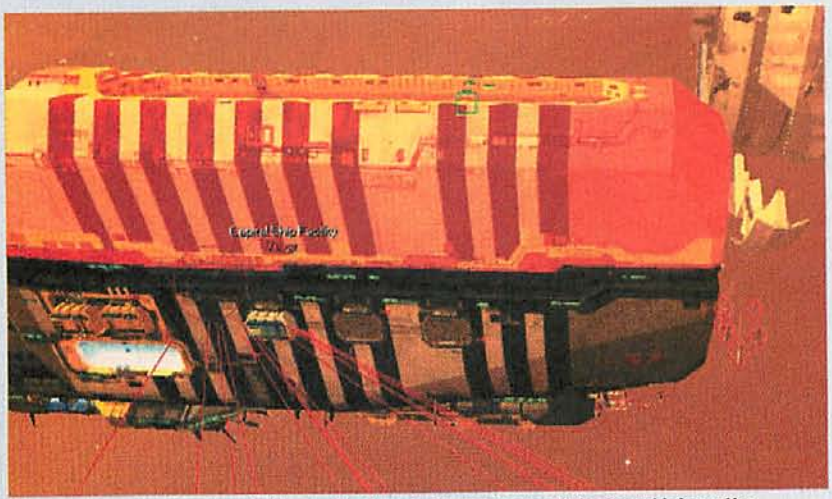
You should also ignore the strike-force formations most of the time. Their main purpose is to keep the entire formation moving



**Target subsystems like the capital-ship facility to stop enemy reinforcements if you don't have the firepower to take down the entire ship.**



A carrier is virtually defenseless against strafing runs.



Most orders should be given in the overhead mode for maximum efficiency and information.



at the same speed, but it usually takes way too long for the ships to fall into formation. It might look neater and prettier, but it'll waste valuable time that you might not have.

### Keep busy

Decide on your strategy at the start of the game, and don't stray. Always have your ships researching and building something until there's nothing left that you need or want. Research is slow and expensive in *HW2*, so if you're going for the capital ships, build your research and capital-ship facilities as soon as you can. Ignore the corvettes and frigates, or you'll find you won't have enough resources to research and build the necessary destroyers and battle cruisers. Luxuries like technologies to increase speed for your gunships and fighters are distractions that will lead the unwary to defeat.

If you're doing the opposite and opting for a raiding strategy with small ships, ignore the capital stuff until the endgame. It will cost up to 10,000 resource points and 10 minutes to research and build a battle cruiser. There is never enough time and resources for you to build everything in *HW2*, so pick one and stick to it. Otherwise, you'll find yourself broke and being beaten to a pulp while your hangers are filled with half-built ships.

In a game that's as large as *HW2*, there'll certainly be many different strategies and formulas for success. But as long as you have a clear strategy and stay focused on efficient resource gathering and production, you should be able to put up a decent fight against anyone.

Good luck, admiral, and good hunting.

# COMPUTER GAMING WORLD


ABS Computer **Ultimate Game Machine** ..... 146-147
ACTIVISION **Call of Duty** ..... 48-49
ACTIVISION **Empires** ..... 38-39
Advanced Micro Devices **AMD Athlon 64 FX** ..... 81
Amazon.com **Top Sellers** ..... 68, 69
Antec, Inc. **Power Supply** ..... 175
Atari, Inc. **Civilization III: Conquest** ..... 137
Atari, Inc. **Gothic II** ..... 119
Atari, Inc. **Horizons** ..... 36-37
Atari, Inc. **Magic the Gathering Battlegrounds (demo)** ..... onsert
Atari, Inc. **Neverwinter Nights: Hordes of the Underd** ..... 92-93
Atari, Inc. **Unreal Tournament 2K4** ..... 82-83
ATI Technologies, Inc. **Radeon R360 graphics card** ..... 170-171
Chips & Bits **www.chipsbits.com** ..... 139
Chips & Bits **www.chipsbits.com** ..... 152-153
Creative Labs **Audigy II ZS** ..... 202
Creative Labs **Gigaworks Speakers** ..... 179
Cyberpower Systems **Cyberpower PC** ..... 181
Dell Computer Corp. **Dimension & Inspiron Systems** ..... 44-45
Dreamcatcher Interactive **Painkiller** ..... 72-73
Eagle Games, Inc. **Age of Mythology Board Game** ..... 109
Eagle Games, Inc. **War! Age of Imperialism** ..... 111
Earthlink **Earthlink (demo)** ..... onsert
Eidos Interactive, Inc. **Commandos 3** ..... 6-7
Eidos Interactive, Inc. **Deus Ex 2: Invisible War** ..... 59-61
Electronic Arts **Medal of Honor: Allied Assault-Breakthrough** ..... 2-5
Electronic Arts **SimCity 4** ..... 20-21
Enlight Interactive, Inc. **X-2 The Threat** ..... 145
iBuyPower **iBuyPower Computer** ..... 176-177
Infogrames, Inc. **T3: War of the Machines** ..... 10-11
LucasArts Entertainment **Armed & Dangerous** ..... 29
LucasArts Entertainment **Galaxies** ..... 14-15
Maxis-EA **The Sims: Bustin Out** ..... 149
Microsoft **Age of Mythology: The Titans** ..... 74-75
Microsoft **Counter-Strike** ..... 31
Microsoft **Dungeon Siege II** ..... 141
Microsoft **Halo PC** ..... 8-9
Mythic Entertainment **Dark Age of Camelot** ..... 129, 131, 132-133
New Egg.com **New Egg.com** ..... 201
Riverdeep, Inc. **Kasparov Chessmate** ..... 185
Saitek Industries LTD, Inc. **GamePad Family** ..... 183
Sony Online Entertainment **EQ Evolution** ..... 112-113
Sony Online Entertainment **Lords of EverQuest** ..... 33-35
Sony Online Entertainment **Lords of EverQuest** ..... 52a-h
Sony Online Entertainment **The PlanetSide Expansion #1** ..... 18-19
Sony Online Entertainment **The PlanetSide Expansion #1** ..... 25
Square Enix U.S.A. **Final Fantasy XI** ..... 27
Take 2 Interactive Software **Max Payne 2** ..... 56-57
Take 2 Interactive Software **Railroad Tycoon 3** ..... 71
Take 2 Interactive Software **Space Colony** ..... 91
Tapwave, Inc **Zodiac** ..... 103
THQ Inc. **Warhammer 40K Fire Warrior** ..... 76-77
Ubi Soft Entertainment **Myst: Uru** ..... 46-47
Ubi Soft Entertainment **Prince of Persia** ..... 12-13
Ubi Soft Entertainment **Warlords IV** ..... 143
Ubi Soft Entertainment **XIII** ..... 94-95
Vivendi Universal Games **Homeworld 2** ..... 100a-c
Vivendi Universal Games **Lords of the Realm III** ..... 22-23
Vivendi Universal Games **The Hobbit** ..... 63
Vivendi Universal Games **War of the Ring** ..... 64-65
Voodoo Computers **Voodoo Computers** ..... 55
Wizards of the Coast **Mirrodin: Expansion Pack** ..... 67



The Most Trusted Tech Buying Advice Online

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA

pcmag.com

What to Buy • Where to Buy It • How to Get the Most From Your Purchase

**Reviews**

First Looks - Comparisons - Editor's Choice - Product Guides

**Solutions**

2000+ Tips on How To Get the Most from Your Tech

**News**

Product Bulletins - Special Reports - Show Reports

**Opinion**

Michael Miller - Bill Machrone - John Dvorak and more

**Shop**

Computers - Photography - Electronics - Software - Compare Prices and Buy

PC MAGAZINE

THE INDEPENDENT GUIDE TO TECHNOLOGY

# Scorched Earth

## Blamestorming

Games aren't evil, but Tyne Daly is **By Robert Coffey** robert_coffey@ziffdavis.com

I had hoped that *The Vagina Monologues* would be our salvation. That has got to be one seriously screwed-up ventriloquist act, I reasoned. People are bound to get all freaked out over that. Imagine my chagrin when I discovered that instead of a horrifying gynecological Señorita Wences, the *Monologues* were nothing more than an unentertaining, uninteresting, unbearably unctuous scream of acute self-consciousness masquerading as Something Important (kind of like Kevin Costner but with fallopian tubes). Oh well, maybe another scourge of western civilization will come along soon; in the meantime it looks like it's up to us gamers to weather the scapegoating.

Not that I'm not sick and tired of it, and not that you shouldn't be too. There are plenty of perfectly good reasons to ostracize me and, believe me, being a gamer is the least of them. But as soon as something bad happens somewhere, gamers immediately have to defend themselves and their hobby as Joe Uninformed Citizen, and his designated idiot network anchor, look for the root of it in gaming somehow. Did someone shoot up a school? They must have played *Doom* and that made them do it. Did someone fly a plane into a building? Better find out if they trained with a civilian flight sim. It's a reflex action in the most literal sense—no thought, just simple response. It's a lot like the gag reflex, which, interestingly enough, these pinheads invariably trigger in me.

Not that I'm against assigning blame. Personally I blame Tyne Daly...for pretty much anything. I can't get a seat on the commuter train, Tyne Daly must've parked her fat ass on the last one. My 7-year-old starts using air quotes and sneering, "Really 'funny', Dad," I'm guessing that gorgon Tyne Daly taught him how in day care. The men's room, far too close to my cubicle for comfort, has a stench that is peeling paint and melting tiles, odds are Tyne Daly snuck in there yet again and "marked her territory" after another long night galloping naked down the freeway on all fours, her foaming, voluminous maw scooping up and devouring road kill while innocent motorists turn to stone at the mere sight of her massive scaled hide, their cars colliding and exploding in enormous fireballs—but I digress. Suffice it to say, this is a great system and I highly recommend it.



**It's not like Jack the Ripper spent his days playing *Grand Theft Buggy*.**

Because in my mind, blaming Tyne Daly makes about as much sense as blaming games. It's oddly reassuring to be able to point at something you don't understand and blame it for something else you don't understand. Or don't want to devote a whole lot of thought to. It's a lot easier to hold *Doom* responsible for some horror than to figure out the role parenting, society, and good old-fashioned unexplainable craziness played. But what about those Tennessee teenagers, the soulless morons who fired shotguns at a highway this summer, killing a man and claiming they were inspired by *Grand Theft Auto III*? Replace murder with wrecking the family car, and you've got two kids trying to get out of being grounded. Absolutely pathetic.

I'm no social scientist, but here's an idea: Some people are just bad. It's not like Jack the Ripper spent his days playing *Grand Theft Buggy*, is it? Some people are evil, stupid, insane, or a delightful combination of all three. In fact, I believe that once upon a time this concept, the There Are Bad People Theory, worked for most people. Think about it: Was anyone uncomfortable applying this theory to Ted Bundy (evil), Typhoid Mary (stupid), Jeffrey Dahmer (insane), or the boil on the ass of Satan that first told Michael Bolton he could sing (all three)? When did people start demanding a reason for everything? Why can't things just plain suck anymore?

There is one thing for us gamers to hold on to: Pretty much everything society has blamed previously has not only been cleared, it's been embraced. Comic books, jazz, movies, rock music, porn (let's be honest with ourselves here—Mr. and Mrs. America are the world's largest consumer of smut, thus arguably making *Yank My Doodle, It's a Dandy!* a more significant film than *Citizen Kane*) have all been pretty much given a pass. It's just a matter of time before people catch up to what we already know—we're the cool people of the future.

ILLUSTRATION BY JON WAYSHAK

Computer Gaming World (ISSN 0744-6667) is published monthly by Ziff Davis Media, Inc., 28 E. 28th St., New York, NY 10016. Subscription rate is $27.97 for a one-year subscription (12 issues). Canada and all other countries add $16.00 for surface mail. Postmaster: Send address changes to Computer Gaming World, P.O. Box 57167, Boulder, CO 80328-7167. Canadian GST registration number is 865286033. Canada Post International Pub's Mail Product (Canada Distribution) Sales Agreement No. 1058649. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY 10016 and additional mailing offices. Printed in the U.S.A.

NewEgg.com -- Online Computer Parts, Peripherals, Components, and Accessories-Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address http://www.newegg.com/

5 Million+ Unique Visitors Per Month

RMA REQUEST | RMA STATUS | VIEW CART | ACCOUNT UPDATE | WISH LIST | ORDER STATUS | HELP

newegg.com

ALL PRODUCTS | COMPUTER HARDWARE | SOFTWARE | MAC STORE | DIGITAL CAMERA | NETWORK | ELECTRONICS & ACCESSORIES | CELLULAR PHONE | GENERIC PRODUCTS | NOTEBOOK | REFURBISHED ITEMS

SHOP BY CATEGORY | SHOP BY BRAND | TOP 10 SELLERS | NEW PRODUCTS | SPECIAL SALES | REBATE SALES

SEARCH: Description (Detail View) (Enter Find It Code™ Here) go ADVANCED SEARCH

Find It Code™

# Best Value, Always!

**MSI** Motherboard for AMD Processors 400MHz FSB
- Dual Ultra DMA ATA 133 AGP 8x
- K7N2 Delta-L
- Retail

$85.00 CGW13130419 FREE SHIPPING

**AMD** Athlon 64 3200+ 64-bit interface
- L2 Cache
- Unbuffered DIMMs
- Up to 3.2GB/Sec Memory Bandwidth
- Retail

$445.00 CGW19103416 FREE SHIPPING

**Crucial** Micron *256MB* 32x64 PC2100 DDR RAM
- 184 Pin Cas Latency 2.5
- Unbuffered 2.5V
- CT3264Z265
- OEM

$44.00* CGW20145001 FREE SHIPPING

**ATI** Radeon 9600 Pro 128MB AGP 8x DVI/TV
- SmoothVision™ 2.1
- 2048x1536 60Hz At 16.7M Colors
- VGA+DVI+S-Video
- Retail

$174.00 CGW14102276 FREE SHIPPING

**Toshiba** Satellite A10-S128 w/ Intel Celeron 2.0GHz 400MHz FSB
- Windows XP Home
- 256MB PC2100
- 30GB Hard Drive
- 15" TFT Active Matrix
- Retail

$899.00 CGW34114023 FREE SHIPPING

**Asus** Motherboard for Intel Pentium 4 Celeron Processors 800MHz FSB
- Dual Ultra DMA ATA 100 AGP 8x
- P4P800 Deluxe
- Retail

$133.00 CGW13131450 FREE SHIPPING

**Intel** Pentium 4 *2.8GHz* 512K Cache Socket 478 800MHz FSB Hyper Threading Technology Northwood Processor
- BX80532PG2800D
- Retail

$265.00 CGW19116161 FREE SHIPPING

**Corsair** *512MB* 64x64 PC3200 DDR RAM
- 184 Pin Cas Latency 2.5
- Unbuffered 2.5V
- VS512MB400
- OEM

$86.00* CGW20145026 FREE SHIPPING

**VGA Chaintech** Geforce FX 5200 128MB DDR
- AGP 8x/4x
- 2048x1536 85Hz
- VGA+DVI+S-Video Out
- Retail

$69.00 CGW14145042 FREE SHIPPING

**Sony** Vaio V505BX 2GHz Pentium M 400MHz FSB
- Windows XP Pro
- 512MB Memory
- 40GB Hard Drive
- 12.1" XGA TFT
- Retail

$1699.00 CGW34115043 FREE SHIPPING

**ViewSonic** 17" CRT Perfect Flat Monitor E70F+SB
- 0.25mm Dot Pitch
- 1280x1024
- 3x UltraBrite
- Retail

$139.00 CGW24116254 FREE SHIPPING

**Dynapower** Metis ATX Mid-Tower Case
- 300 Watt Power Supply
- 80mm Optical Fan
- 2x USB
- CS-I3ASB.701
- Retail

$40.00 CGW11138001 FREE SHIPPING

**Lite On** 52x32x52 CDRW Black ATAPI-E/IDE
- 80ms Access Time
- 2MB Memory Buffer
- LTR-52327S
- OEM

$42.99 CGW27106197 FREE SHIPPING

**Maxtor** *40GB* 7200RPM Diamond Max Plus IDE Ultra Hard Drive
- ATA 133
- 2MB Cache
- 6E040L0
- OEM

$58.50 CGW22140133 FREE SHIPPING

**Sony** Cyber-shot DSC-P92 5.0MP 3x Optical 4x Digital Zoom 1/1.8" CCD 1.5" TFT LCD
- 5 Scene Modes
- Multi-Burst Mode
- Video Output
- Retail

$365.00 CGW30150031 FREE SHIPPING

**Samsung** 17" LCD Flat Panel Monitor
- 0.26mm Pixel Pitch
- 1280x1024
- 173V Silver
- Retail

$399.00 CGW24001116 FREE SHIPPING

**Antec** Performance II Black ATX Mini Tower Case w/ Antec 350W Power Supply
- 2 Front USB
- 1 Front IEEE 1394 Firewire Port
- Retail

$93.00 CGW11129125 FREE SHIPPING

**Sony** 4x DVD+R/RW DVD Recorder Black 40x CDROM
- ATAPI EIDE
- 8MB Buffer
- DW-U10A-BK
- OEM

$169.99 CGW27131209 FREE SHIPPING

**Western Digital** *80GB* "Special Edition" 7200RPM IDE Ultra Hard Drive
- ATA 100
- 8MB Cache
- WD800JB
- OEM

$78.00 CGW22144122 FREE SHIPPING

**Nikon** Coolpix 4300 4.0MP 3x Optical 4x Digital Zoom 1/1.8" CCD 1.5" TFT LCD
- 12 Scene Modes
- 1-Touch Upload
- Superior Exposure Metering
- Retail

$336.00 CGW30113103 FREE SHIPPING

**Epson** Stylus Photo 960 Printer
- 8ppm Black
- 6-Color Photo Dye Ink
- 2880x1440 dpi
- Retail

$313.00 CGW28103136 FREE SHIPPING

**Logitech** Z-640 5.1 Speaker
- Subwoofer Design
- Innovative Satellite
- Internal Power Supply
- Retail

$65.00 CGW36121104 FREE SHIPPING

**Creative Labs** Sound Blaster Live! Dolby Digital 5.1 PCI 32 Bit w/ EMU10K1 Digital Signal Processor
- SB0220
- OEM

$40.00 CGW29102156 FREE SHIPPING

**Sierra** Half Life Platinum Edition 2 PC Game
- Retail

$25.00 CGW32128103 FREE SHIPPING

**Canon** PowerShot S400 4.0MP 3x Optical 3.6x Digital Zoom 1/1.8" CCD 1.5" TFT LCD
- Enhanced Movie Mode
- 9-Point AiAF Auto Focus
- DIGIC & iSAPS Technology

$415.00 CGW30120015 FREE SHIPPING

**MSI** Slim PC Metis 266
- Supports AMD Athlon XP CPU
- 266MHz FSB
- 2GB RAM
- Retail

$129.00 CGW56101110 FREE SHIPPING

**Allied** 400 Watt Switching Power Supply
- Dual Fans
- Ideal for P3/P4 & AMD Systems
- ATX400
- Retail

$39.00 CGW17154013 FREE SHIPPING

**Palm** Tungsten T2 Handheld Organizer
- Palm OS 5.2.1
- 5 Way Navigation
- 32MB Memory
- Dim. 4"x3"x0.6"
- Retail

$335.00 CGW58101120 FREE SHIPPING

**Blizzard** Diable II Battle Chest PC Game
- Retail

$33.00 CGW32127105 FREE SHIPPING

**Sandisk** *256MB* Secure Digital Card
- High Transfer Rate
- Cryptographic Security
- Used for a Variety of Digital Products
- Retail

$68.00 CGW20180600 FREE SHIPPING

**Archos** Video AV120 Handheld Device
- Modular MP4 Video & MP3 Music Player
- Photo Viewer
- Retail

$299.00 CGW55501106 FREE SHIPPING

**EluminX** Illuminated Keyboard Black
- Aqua Marine Illuminated Color
- 12 Function Keys
- Slim Ergo Design
- Retail

$79.95 CGW23190002 FREE SHIPPING

**Trendnet** Wireless LAN PCMCIA Network Adapter
- 32-bit CardBus
- IEEE 802.11b
- 100-300 Meters Outdoor
- Retail

$21.50 CGW33156101 FREE SHIPPING

**Apacer** *128MB* Handy Drive Steno "Platinum Edition" USB 2.0 Flash Hard Drive
- Optical Security Function Included
- Retail

$42.00 CGW20180716 FREE SHIPPING

**Olympus** *128MB* xD-Picture Card
- Increased Memory Capacity
- Durable & Versatile
- XDPC128MB
- Retail

$61.50 CGW20196102 FREE SHIPPING

98% orders ship within 1 business day! Realtime inventory and pricing.

4,000+ product reviews from buyers like you.

4,000+ of customer experiences for you to read and compare.

9.82/10 Rating from 4,700+ Reviews on Resellerratings.com.

Bizrate.com Certified Merchant with 98% Satisfactory Rating from 25,000+ customers.

Winner of the Bizrate.com Circle of Excellence Award

©2003 NewEgg.com. All rights reserved. All prices and specifications are subject to change without notice. NewEgg.com is not responsible for typographical errors. All typographical errors are subject to correction.

*RAM prices do and will fluctuate dramatically due to the nature of the market. The listed prices were the current price at the time this ad was submitted to the publisher on 9/24/03.




# LISTEN UP SOLDIER!

## GET IN THE GAME WITH THE LATEST AUDIO WEAPONRY

Sound BLASTER AUDIGY 2 ZS

The only way to capture the vivid intensity of battle in Call of Duty™ is from the action packed sound of the new Sound Blaster® Audigy® 2 ZS. Hear the distinct clarity of artillery exploding all around you from dramatic EAX® ADVANCED HD™ environmental effects in 7.1 surround. Report now to www.soundblaster.com

SOUNDS BEST ON Sound BLASTER 24-bit ADVANCED HD

**Get in the battle – Get Creative.**



Sound Blaster® Audigy® 2 ZS Platinum Pro

LUCASFILM THX · EAX ADVANCED HD · 7.1 · ACTIVISION · INFINITY WARD

Get CREATIVE

©2003 Creative Technology Ltd. The Creative logo is a registered trademark of Creative Technology Ltd. in the United States and/or other countries. ©2003 Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark and Call of Duty is a trademark of Activision, Inc., and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Developed by Infinity Ward, Inc. This product contains software technology licensed from Id Software ("Id Technology"). Id Technology ©1999-2000 Id Software, Inc. All brands or product names listed are trademarks or registered trademarks and are property of their respective holders.